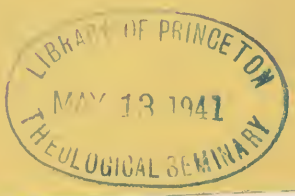

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Wilkinson, William Cleaver
1833-1920.
Modern masters of pulpit
discourse

MODERN MASTERS *of* PULPIT DISCOURSE

BY

WILLIAM CLEAVER WILKINSON

Author of "The Epic of Saul," "The Epic of Paul," "The Epic of Moses," etc.

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY
NEW YORK AND LONDON
1905

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[Printed in the United States of America]

Published, April, 1905

PREFACE

Most of the criticisms in this volume were written during the lifetime of their several subjects, and then published anonymously as a series under a common title in "The Homiletic Review." It was from the first in the thought of the author to gather them eventually into a book. When the time approached for doing this, he, with a view to making the list of preachers considered inclusive enough to satisfy any just expectation which the proposal of such a volume might be conceived as awakening, felt it desirable to add a few names not embraced in the original series. The supplementary papers resulting were published independently under the name of the author.

It was believed that to change the tense in which these papers were first written, and to recast their form, would be to deprive them of a certain vividness due to the contemporaneous conditions attending and affecting their production. Accordingly, though they have been carefully reconsidered and revised throughout, and retrenched slightly in some cases, and in some cases considerably enlarged, still they are substantially the same in their text and their tenor as when they originally appeared. The author, however, in the present reproduction of his criticisms, has acted somewhat as a kind of posthumous editor to himself, prefacing nearly all of them with explanations and comments which he hopes will be found pertinent and acceptable.

While the plan of making the present book was still under advisement, the title for such possible volume that first came to the author's mind was, "Some Preachers of

To-day and Yesterday." (That would in fact have been my own final choice of title; but I deferred to my publishers' preference of the alternative title which the book accordingly now bears.) I mention this circumstance to explain a turn of expression naturally suggested by it, that occurs in the opening of the paper devoted to Mr. Moody, as also in the opening of each one of the two papers following that, which conclude the series. Incorporated in the text of the last two papers will be found a statement of the warrant felt by the writer to exist for including examples from so long ago as are Jesus and Paul, in a list of subjects entitled, "Modern Masters of Pulpit Discourse."

Finally, the author, indulging the impulse he often feels to put his thought and his feeling into verse, has introduced at the end of his volume, a group of sonnets, which, if he has been successful in his attempt thus briefly to express, in metre and rhyme, the sum and spirit of his criticisms, the reader will find no difficulty in assigning, without the help of titles to guide him, to their respective subjects in the pages preceding.

I

HENRY WARD BEECHER

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The following criticism, as will appear from the text itself of the paper, was first published very soon after the death of the eminent subject. It stands here for the most part unchanged from the form in which it then saw the light. I have not scrupled, however, in the present reproduction of it, to introduce at points, without particular notice to the reader, matter not included in the criticism when it was originally given to the public.

In the course of the revision to which I have subjected my work in preparation for the use now made of it, I have not found any occasion to modify materially the judgments, favorable or unfavorable, that I at first felt compelled to pronounce on Henry Ward Beecher. The criticism provoked criticism of the critic, notably from the pen of Dr. Lyman Abbott. I have carefully considered what he had to object to my views and statements — with the result which I have already just indicated. Dr. Abbott's "Reply," the editor of the "Homiletic Review" (in which periodical the criticism had appeared), acting with the cheerful consent and approval of the present writer, admitted to his pages. Of course the critic (who, by the way, in the present case, as in almost all the other cases, published his criticism anonymously — this, with ready deference on his part to the wish of the editor) made no rejoinder to Dr. Abbott's "Reply." A correspondent, however, of the editor's, personally unknown to the critic, pointed out, in a note which, as deemed suitable, perhaps indeed intended by the writer, for such use, was published in

the "Review," that the "Reply" did not meet the criticism at all, but moving indeed in the opposite direction, left it to one side, without touching it.

In immediate preparation for writing his criticism, which was planned for while the subject of it was still living, the author, altho he had previously had repeated opportunities to hear Mr. Beecher from the pulpit and from the platform, desiring to refresh his impression of the great preacher's living eloquence, went one Sunday morning to Plymouth Church for the purpose of sitting yet again under the spell of that incomparable oratory. It may serve to show how the key of feeling was given me anew, in which I was necessarily to pitch my subsequent criticism, if I here describe that memorable occasion. It may also bring the marvelous man, and the marvelous environment that he had created for himself, more vividly before the imagination of some of the younger among the readers of this book.

It was the first Sunday morning after Mr. Beecher's "home-return" from his last visit to Great Britain.

The weather was cloudy-bright, and crisp with autumn cool. The streets were washed cleaner than man could wash them, with a great rain of God fallen during the night. The conditions were all favorable for a full frequence of hearers and spectators at Plymouth Church. If I had not been influentially introduced, I should not have got a seat at all. As it was, many stood where there was standing-room in the aisles, and clusters of people clung standing, like swarming bees, on the fringes of the great congregation about the doors. The spectacle was impressive.

The pulpit platform was groved and mounded with herb and flower in festal decoration, to greet and honor the preacher. Spray of leaf and bloom climbed aspiring, on either side the pulpit. "Welcome" blazed in flamy red of flower, on a green ground of foliage, behind and above Mr. Beecher

— a mute but eloquent voice to interpret the emblem contained in all that sudden and brilliant burst of bloom.

But the most impressive, if not the most beautiful, flower to be seen on the platform, I have not yet mentioned. This had its place in the midst of the display, and formed the center-piece which seemed, like the keystone of an arch, to crown and support the whole. It was the long-leaved almond-blossom that flourished, white and venerable, on the head of Mr. Beecher himself.

To me the sight was inexpressibly pathetic. The large, smooth-shaven, rubicund face of the preacher set off most strikingly the silver of his hair, streaming in long locks behind the ears. Fulness of blood which is the life seemed to be imported by the warm color of the skin; but the hoary head betokened the inevitably stealing frost of age. If I had seen before me an old age crowning a fruitful life without reproach, the sight would still have been one to move tears perhaps — but not such tears! Not tears of disappointment, of regret, of remorse, of passionate shame! As the case stood, indignation, reprobation, were half laid to sleep in the arms of over-persuading pure sorrow and sympathy. The sight became simply, and, as I said, unspeakably, affecting. In this mood of softened feeling, sympathetic, far more than antipathetic, I sat listening, beholding and remembering. throughout the service.

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," was the first hymn given out by Mr. Beecher. "One of his favorite hymns," I heard whispered by a listener at my side. It was sung sweetly and strongly by the great multitude of voices. I saw Mr. Beecher joining in the song. After what seemed to me a more than usually prolonged organ interlude, preparatory to the last stanza with its endeavoring aspiration, "Oh, that with yonder sacred throng," I watched Mr. Beecher, and felt sure, by a movement of his broad, bare,

mobile throat, that I saw him swallowing a big emotion which almost choked him. If it was a prayer on his part, in the sentiment of the stanza, I could join in it heartily, on behalf of the preacher, too, as well as on behalf of his congregation, including myself, whatever our several sin. And, in either case, not without hope; for is it not written, "His mercy endureth forever?"

The prayer that followed the singing was tender and reverent. There was efflorescence, feeble comparatively, but not ineffectual, of the old poetic instinct in conception and in phrase, native and habitual in prayer to this wonderful genius. Poetry and devotion are natural kindred, witness forever the psalms of David. But it is better when devotion inspires to poetry, than it is when poetry simply takes the form of devotion.

That blithe humor which was not the least remarkable among the many remarkable survivals of faculty to old age, in this world-worn, and, one would have supposed, world-weary soul, broke out naturally, and not blameworthily, in just one word of his, aptly and most undemonstratively spoken. Assistant pastor Halliday, himself a hoary-headed man, said, promptingly, from his place near the platform: "You omitted the notice of the Ladies' Sewing Circle." Mr. Beecher composedly looked over his handful of notices and said quietly, "I read that,"—at the same time, however, repeating it aloud, "I read that." "I didn't observe it," Mr. Halliday explained. "Evidently," was Mr. Beecher's good-humored response; and a gentle wavelet of mirth rippled over the faces of hearers, while Mr. Beecher visibly strove to smooth out the after smile that softly billowed his own cheeks.

The sermon was a very plain, unilluminated essay on the text, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you

friends." The idea of the discourse was to point the difference between the relation to Christ of servitude and that of love, on the part of the disciple. I felt that the whole drift of the inculcation was a strange and a sad missing of the real sense conveyed by the Savior in those lovely words of his. Mr. Beecher made the change of relation, from that of the servant to that of the friend of Christ, turn on the changed inward state of the disciple's heart, instead of on the pure, free, sweet creative grace of the bestowing and electing Lord himself. How, for me, such treatment did vacate the saying of its transcendent, its characteristic charm! The grace, the kindness, the unearned, unconditional pure love, which, for no cause in *them,* only for all-constraining cause in *Him,* led Jesus to advance those as yet unchanged, but thereafter and thereby, to-be-changed, men, from the rank of servants to the rank of friends — how this exquisite, ineffable, heavenly fragrance was left by the preacher, abiding, unreleased, and as if undiscovered, in the heart of the text!

But Mr. Beecher treated less a text than a topic — an old topic with him and an old treatment. There was no fresh thought, no fresh feeling, in the sermon. It was as if the aged spring had been worn to great weakness in the preacher, and now wearily refused to be elastic. But the congregation were respectfully attentive throughout.

The sentiment of the whole occasion, to me, as I have said, was pathetic. It was indeed wonderful to see a man of seventy-three years, after such a career of variously exhausting toil, with such a crisis in it, so prolonged, of peril, of solicitude, of suspense, of ultimate irrecoverable loss — far more exhausting than any toil — it was wonderful, I say, to see the subject of a history like this, still so vital and so effective as Mr Beecher was, and still tenacious of so much personal affection from so many loyal hearts. But I, remem-

bering the "Silver Wedding" of fifteen years or so before,* and contrasting the unbounded ascription and oblation of that incomparable festival with the seemingly shadowed brilliancy of this welcome from a church to its pastor — I at least could but be occupied less with the vision of what was, than with a vision of what was not, of what was never to be! I saw, all the time, in imagination, the spectacle of Mr. Beecher, old indeed as now, but happily descending, like an afternoon sun, the arcs of a slowly and cloudlessly closing career, the firmament filled, from round about him, with a soft splendor of fame and of influence, no envious mists intercepting his rays, and no ambush bank of dark, deepening upward along the horizon, to receive and quench his orb before its due moment of setting. That which might have been! The inward vision that thus occupied me was a vision — alas, not realized — of the morally noble and ennobling hardly ever surpassed by anything in the realm of fact or of fancy. The absence of the reality haunted me — saddening almost as much as the presence of it, had it been present, would have made glad.

* The reference is to the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mr. Beecher's becoming pastor of Plymouth Church. This occasion will be referred to again, and more fully, in a succeeding paper, that on Dr. Storrs.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

"The most myriad-minded man since Shakespeare," was, twenty years or more ago, the tribute generously paid by the youthful Spurgeon to the genius of Beecher, then himself in the midst of his long and glorious prime. If Mr. Spurgeon now,* sobered with years, with experience, and with sense of responsibility, would hesitate to pay the same tribute again, his hesitation, we may be sure, would be due to other considerations much more than to any change in his estimate of the intellectual powers of the mighty departed. Departed! The present paper is in no sense to be a threnody or a eulogy on Mr. Beecher; but to the writer — and the like must be true of the reader — it was, with the death of this world-famous man, as if a sun had gone suddenly out in the darkening sky. It would require a strange insensibility, either to write or to read of Henry Ward Beecher departed, without some sense of a darkness from the shadow that his withdrawal has thrown. The shadow does not seem so deep as it would have seemed had it fallen twenty years earlier; for the brightness that it then would have followed was greater. But "the cloud that cometh betwixt" cannot wholly extinguish the sun still above the horizon, and sombre change is perceived when even a clouded sun has finally abandoned the firmament. Farewell, O sun! Glorious, indeed, wert thou in the zenith of thy sphere! Some of us can remember when thou wast as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. What fair, fresh splendor

* Before using, as I did, Spurgeon's youthful tribute to Beecher's genius, I wrote to the great London preacher asking whether he had indeed so characterized the pastor of Plymouth Church. Mr. Spurgeon replied admitting that he had in his youth expressed himself in that way, but adding that he would not do it now.

then was thine! How the heavens rejoiced, how the earth was glad, with thy shining! Almost it seemed for a season that God through thee was going to renew the face of the earth. That was thy morning. Alas, that there should have been an evening and a morning to thy day! At least, why did not God make such a day cloudless, if it could not be endless?

We have here to study Mr. Beecher simply as preacher. *What,* in this capacity, was he? *How* was he such? These are our two questions. We seek to analyze, first, his power, and then the secret of his power.

We need be at no loss. Mr. Beecher was very open with the public. He took the whole world into his confidence when, in his Yale lectures on preaching, he told everything that he knew himself concerning himself as preacher. Never before was genius more communicative as to its own mystery. It was a revelation, then to be informed that the mighty madness of Mr. Beecher's pulpit oratory had so self-conscious and so intelligent a method of its own. Genius actually seemed to be reducing itself to the terms of common sense.

"What is preaching?" Mr. Beecher began by asking. The very question had in it the reaction and stimulus of originality and of power. The answer showed that Mr. Beecher understood perfectly well what he himself sought to do in the pulpit; whether or not what he sought there to do was proper preaching, according to any standard deducible from Scripture. Mr. Beecher defined preaching by its object. Its object, he said, was "reconstructed manhood." This formula, at any rate, truly states Mr. Beecher's own object in his pulpit discourse.

The lecturer's way of arriving at the idea of what he affirmed thus to be the distinctive object of preaching, was characteristic, instructively characteristic, of the man. His path of approach to the point was ostensibly Scriptural; really, it was "subjective," to use a philosopher's word, that

is, individual, personal, independent. Peter, Mr. Beecher said, aimed at "reconstructed manhood,"— when, on the day of Pentecost, he opened the Christian dispensation of preaching with that great inaugural sermon of his. There could scarcely have been made an assertion more audaciously independent of fact. The fact is, that what Peter then aimed at, he himself unmistakably stated to be — what? "Reconstructed manhood?" No. Anything like that? No. The conception was something totally different. Peter's object he himself says, was to make everybody take Jesus Christ for "Lord"—that is, for *master,* to be obeyed. These are the words in which he reaches the conclusion, and states the purpose of his argument: "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both *Lord* and Christ." "Reconstructed manhood" might indeed result; but what Peter *aimed at* was obedience to Christ from men, not "reconstructed manhood." The difference of aim and aim is enormous; and all this gulf of difference yawns between Peter as preacher and Mr. Beecher as preacher. Peter's aim, namely, obedience to Christ, was Paul's aim, too; for Paul expressly says: "We preach Christ Jesus as *Lord.*" Paul's aim, and Peter's was — not Mr. Beecher's. The point I now make is a point of prime importance. Let me insist upon it a little.

Mr. Beecher, while he still lived, became perhaps the chief individual formative force for young preachers in America. The flood of his popularity, breaching every provincial barrier of reputation and fairly overspreading the world, made it almost useless, at least for the moment, to offer even a suggestion of vital defect in the idea, and therefore in the method, of that unique and extraordinary preaching which will doubtless always hereafter survive as one of the greatest traditions of power in human speech within the memory of men. When, however, the well-nigh boundless exuberance of his genius and vitality was offered a new outlet in the Yale lectureship on preaching, and Mr. Beecher thus ap-

peared in the capacity of a somewhat more formal and confessed teacher of preachers — and this as widely over the world as his vivid and brilliant book should go to find readers — it seemed but a manful loyalty to individual convictions of truth frankly and respectfully to articulate the sense which I had of a serious insufficiency in Mr. Beecher's conception itself of preaching, that threatened an incalculable injury to the cause of evangelism at large, if it should become incorporated into the theory and practice of a generation of gospel ministers. This delicate task I accordingly undertook at the time, in a public expression, which, as the matter involved is so fundamental and so vital, I here, in substance, reproduce.

Mr. Beecher in his Yale lectures disclaimed being a professor of homiletics. He even modestly declined to be regarded as a lecturer on preaching. He preferred to talk about the work of his life in the freedom of familiar and, as it were, confidential conversation. Such was the engaging attitude which he assumed in occupying the chair of that lectureship on preaching at Yale which is inscribed with the clear and venerable name of his father. I shall not, therefore, commit the mistake of attempting to stretch his half-autobiographic confidences on the Procrustean bed of a scientific homiletical system. Mr. Beecher, however, in these lectures, perhaps somewhat unexpectedly to the general public, disclosed himself as an intelligent and self-conscious, far more than a blind and automatic, elemental force. The fine madness of his genius all the while, so it seems, obeyed a method of its own. It was not exclusively a divine breath of inspiration blowing where it listed that made that matchless eloquence of the man. It was partly, too, the patient labor and calculable result of art. Mr. Beecher had an aim, and he strove toward it. His career was not lucky. It was successful. The history which it contains of his success imparts its chief value to the lately published volume of his glowing improvisations on preaching.

It would be foolish, and it would be unfair, to treat these

lectures as if they aspired to construct a dogmatic homiletical system. They should be accepted for precisely what they are, the frank autobiographical disclosures of one of the greatest and, as it seems, one of the most deliberately artful or artistic, public speakers that the world has ever seen. So accepting them, we may yet quite legitimately inquire, with admiring curiosity, but with uncompromised freedom, whether the end which this wonderful eloquence proposed to itself, and the method which it has pursued, are the true end and the true method of gospel preaching. Let this, for the moment, be our purpose.

Our question is simple. Let it be perfectly unambiguous. It is not whether Mr. Beecher's art of public speaking was good or not. That question would be ludicrously too late to be raised to-day. Mr. Beecher was unquestionably one of the very greatest of all masters living or dead of men in speech. Our question is not, therefore, whether Mr. Beecher's public speaking was a true model in oratory or not. Our question is whether Mr. Beecher's avowed aim in his public speaking from the pulpit, and his method accordingly adopted, are the true aim and the true method for *preaching*. In a word, did Mr. Beecher, in his theory, or in his practice, give the right answer to the question which entitles the first lecture of his volume, viz.: "What is Preaching?"

I quote two sentences which state, as sharply as it is anywhere stated in the course of the lecture, Mr. Beecher's opinion of what preaching ought to be, or in other words, of what preaching is, according to the Scriptural idea:

"The thing that a preacher aims at all the while is *reconstructed manhood* [Italics Mr. Beecher's], a nobler idea in his congregation of how people ought to live, and what they ought to be." . . . "If you will look through the New Testament with your eye on that point, you will find that Paul — the greatest of all preachers, I take it — aimed all the way through, and certainly Peter, in his famous sermon on the day of Pentecost, aimed at reconstructed manhood."

Now any one who has thoughtfully noticed the tenor of Mr. Beecher's own preaching will acknowledge that these sentences truthfully reveal the informing spirit of his public ministry. Mr. Beecher's aim was precisely that whose statement he emphasizes with Italic letters, namely, "*reconstructed manhood.*" His sermons constantly seek to present the ideal of a noble and beautiful character, and they constantly summon men to the endeavor to realize the ideal. Every generous sentiment of which human nature, in its best unregenerate estate, is capable, is sung and celebrated in his preaching. Love, honor, gentleness, purity, truth — these magnetic words recur with endless iteration in his discourse, recalling the hearer perpetually to the recollection of his own best thoughts, and tempting him irresistibly to a short Sabbath-day excursion on the wings of lofty aspiration. In a word, whatever eloquence, advised by tact and inspired by moral fervor, can effect toward "reconstructing" the fallen nature of sinful men — that Mr. Beecher's preaching effected, as it no doubt still in a measure effects. I have no disposition, certainly, to disparage the good thus effected. It is for God alone to set the unalterably true appraisal on the work of each one of us all. We must none of us judge, in the case either of ourselves or of another, before the time. But it is unquestionably proper for us to inquire, Is Mr. Beecher's idea of preaching, as stated in his words and illustrated in his life, the Scriptural idea? Does the Bible propose "reconstructed manhood" as the true aim of preaching?

It is one thing to pronounce "reconstructed manhood" a *result* that may be expected to follow from preaching. It is quite another thing to pronounce "reconstructed manhood" the proper *aim* of preaching. The difference indeed is enormous. If "reconstructed manhood" is to be consciously and directly aimed at by a preacher, then of course there is room in that preacher's method for the enticing words of man's wisdom which Mr. Beecher knew so well how to use. But if, on the other hand, something else than

"reconstructed manhood" is to lead the preacher's eye as his only proper conscious *aim,* then the resort perhaps must be to a widely different quarter for the power that shall make preaching effectual.

As already said, Mr. Beecher displayed extraordinary temerity in hazarding his appeal to Peter's Pentecostal sermon for confirmation of his theory of the aim of preaching. "*Certainly,*" he shuts up his eyes and blindly says, "*certainly,*" Peter in that sermon aimed at "reconstructed manhood." We turn to the sermon, and find this to be the analysis of it. Peter begins by showing the absurdity of the charge that the polyglot preachers of that miraculous day were merely intoxicated persons. He proceeds to explain that on the contrary they were simply experiencing a fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, which foretold just such manifestations of the Divine presence and power among men. He next recalls to the recollection of the multitude the life and works of Jesus, and charges home upon his hearers the damning guilt of his crucifixion. Then follows an interpretation of a Psalm of David to prove that its reference was Messianic, and that its language was fulfilled in the dying and rising of Jesus. It was the risen Jesus, ascended now to the throne by the side of the Father, that had poured out on his disciples the baptism of spiritual power whose effects were that day beheld. Peter closes his sermon with these words: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

This is absolutely all the matter contained in Peter's sermon. And yet it is of this sermon that Mr. Beecher plucks heart to say, "Peter certainly, in his famous sermon on the day of Pentecost, aimed at reconstructed manhood!" Of all things in this universe to find in such a sermon — "reconstructed manhood!" Now, of course, Mr. Beecher had no intention of being disingenuous when he made so rash an assertion. He merely had vividly in mind his own individual idea of what preaching should be — it occurred to

him at the instant that here was a good Scriptural instance that ought to correspond — it probably did correspond — at any rate he would have it correspond, and without more ado, presto! it "certainly" corresponded.

It is quite true, however, that Peter's Pentecostal sermon furnishes a plain hint of the proper aim of preaching. The hint is found in the last sentence of the sermon. The proper aim of preaching there disclosed is to induce men to acknowledge Christ's lordship. In brief phrase, not "reconstructed manhood," but obedience to Christ, is the Scriptural and the safe, the only Scriptural and the only safe, aim of right preaching. "Reconstructed manhood" will follow. But that is the corollary, and not the chief proposition. Christ first, and then man. The earth is all the better served by suffering the sun to hold the centre of the system.

It is fair to Mr. Beecher to assume that probably when he affirmed "reconstructed manhood" to be Paul's aim in preaching, he in perfect good faith founded upon that passage of Paul in Ephesians, "He (Jesus Christ) gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." But Paul was not here stating the aim he had in preaching; he was stating the aim Christ had in furnishing his church with the various forms of ministry named. In truth what Paul here said had no respect at all to the natural, the unregenerate, man needing to be "reconstructed," but respect exclusively to the man now already "reconstructed," the regenerate man, the Christian, who having been started right needed only to be carried forward to the point of perfection. The general aim of Paul in his preaching of course had respect not simply to "saints," that is, persons already Christians, but also to sinners; that is, persons needing to be converted into Christians. That general

aim of his Paul himself comprehensively and sufficiently stated in declaring that he was apostle for the obedience of Christ. Such obedience secured would infallibly result in what may rhetorically be called "reconstructed manhood"— although that form of expression certainly, with perhaps also the conception underlying, is much more like Mr. Beecher than it is like the apostle Paul. In treating thus this particular point I have tried in all sincerity to indulge Mr. Beecher's own rhetorical figure found in the word "reconstructed"; but it has been difficult, for the reason that Mr. Beecher's figure is a different one from Paul's. Mr. Beecher's figure implies a building in ruins requiring to be rebuilt; Paul's figure implies a living organism needing nurture and development. The thought itself is as different as is the figure employed to express the thought.

But did Mr. Beecher's preaching in fact conform to the idea of his own definition? I have already implied my own opinion that it did. Mr. Beecher's pulpit discourse is singularly destitute, more destitute than probably Mr. Beecher himself, with all his extraordinary self-knowledge, was aware, of the idea of absolute submission on the part of the human will to authority outside itself. Mr. Beecher, in the very act of deducing his definition of preaching, unconsciously illustrated the insubordinate instinct and habit of his own mind. He treated Scripture in the manner of a man who never had dreamed of anything but having his own way with the word of God, and making it mean whatever he chose. The master idea of *obedience* accordingly he missed. He did not find it, because he did not bring it. There is conspicuously, glaringly, absent, and that not only in this Yale lecture, but throughout the body of Mr. Beecher's pulpit discourses, the one idea fundamental and paramount in New Testament teaching, namely, the idea of obedience to Christ. Strange, too, it seems that this should be so; for Mr. Beecher held on, in singular inconsistency with himself, to the belief of the divinity of Christ.

Of course, I am perfectly aware that I make a serious

criticism on Mr. Beecher in saying that he failed to teach obedience to Christ. But I make my criticism deliberately, and I have even hitherto guarded myself needlessly in making it. For in fact the fault in Mr. Beecher was worse than a negative, it was a positive, fault. He not only failed to teach obedience; he taught insubordination instead of obedience.

Let me not be misunderstood. Mr. Beecher taught a great many things that Christ taught. He preached duties, and he preached them with variety and with power, less perhaps as obligations of conscience, than as condescensions of nobleness. But Christ taught obedience to himself, and this article of Christ's teaching, the capital thing in it, the distinctive thing, Mr. Beecher managed to miss. Mr. Beecher's morality — I mean the morality he preached — was a good morality in the main, except for the lack in it of the saving principle of *obedience due to Christ as Master.* This lacking, it was not a true gospel morality.

"What is Christ to me?" is the title of a sermon of Mr. Beecher's, preached in 1873. I have just looked this over — to find that in answering the question of his title, Mr. Beecher has made exactly nothing whatever of that relation of Christ to the human soul which Christ himself, and Christ's apostles, made the central one of all relations, namely, that of *Lord.* And in Mr. Beecher's text, "Christ" is not even named at all, *except* as "Lord."

Another sermon of Mr. Beecher's, preached in 1874, is entitled "St. Paul's Creed." Now Paul wrote himself down "servant" of Jesus Christ. He said his mission was to bring men to "obedience" among all the nations. He taught the bringing of "every *thought* into captivity to the obedience of Christ." He described his way of preaching Christ to be the preaching of him as *Lord.* He described a saved man to be one who confessed Jesus as *Lord.* The idea of personal obedience to Christ is the regnant thought of this man's life. His "creed" is obedience to Christ. Virtue was nothing, if virtue was not obedience. For what-

ever we do, Paul teaches, we are to do it to the Lord; that is, as obedience.

But what does Mr. Beecher teach, nominally discussing "St. Paul's creed?" Does he make "St. Paul's creed" consist comprehensively of the article of obedience to Christ? No. Does he make "St. Paul's creed" *contain* the article of obedience to Christ? No. Does he at least carefully abstain from anything to conflict with this idea? Read and judge. Mr. Beecher says:

"All society, all *religion, all churches,* all institutions, come as servants to him [man], who is the master of them . . . and who is independent of them — or can be, or ought to be, if he is not."

Again:

"Paul . . . cared for nothing so much as for that ennobled manhood which is the result of the divine influence upon the human soul. . . . Paul was the apostle of manhood — manhood in Christ Jesus — He being both the model and the inspiration."

"Apostle of manhood"— Paul! That is Mr. Beecher's conception of Paul; but it is not Paul's conception of himself. Paul's conception of his own apostleship was that of "apostleship unto obedience." Christ to him was, indeed, as to Mr. Beecher, "model" and "inspiration,"— but more, far more, he was *Lord.*

"If," Mr. Beecher asks, "a man becomes a Christian outside of a church, must he not come into it?" His answer is: "If he wishes to — not otherwise." In short, Obey yourself — no matter about obeying Christ. And this in a sermon on "St. Paul's Creed"!

But Mr. Beecher is "very bold." He says:

"In regard to ordinances, those from which you can abstract benefit, those which do you good, observe. If ordinances come to you and say, 'What can we do for you?' and you see nothing

that they can do for you, they retire. They are not obligatory on you."

Christ says: "Do this in remembrance of me." Mr. Beecher says: That is "not obligatory on you"!

Readers might well doubt — did Mr. Beecher ever really teach thus? I therefore explain that all the citations made in this paper are from authorized editions, in volume, of Mr. Beecher's sermons, with the single exception of the one next to follow, which is from a report in the columns of the "New York Tribune," a journal, at the time of the report, recognized as, for matters pertaining to his interests, a kind of organ of Mr. Beecher.

The spirit exemplified in the foregoing quoted expressions, does not by exception belong to that sermon alone from which the expressions were drawn. It runs through the whole course of Mr. Beecher's preaching, from the beginning to the end. It naturally grew more and more pronounced, as the years went by; and it took, perhaps, a sudden start into violence toward the last; but it was present from the first, and it never for a moment was absent. Mr. Beecher never preached, he would seem never to have known, Christ Jesus *as Lord.*

You may say, "Mr. Beecher's idea of love to Christ superseded with him the idea of obedience, was, indeed, the Moses' rod to all other ideas whatever of human relation to Christ and swallowed them up." I will not dispute or question the greatness of the idea of love to Christ, in Mr. Beecher's conception. The same idea was great also with Peter, with Paul, and with John; but with no one of these did it swallow up the idea of obedience; or, indeed, make that idea anything less than the master idea of their teaching. Nay, it was the "apostle of love," so-called, himself, it was John, who said: "This *is* the love of God that we keep his commandments:" and, "Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God *and do his commandments.*" Love as a sentiment is good; but love as

obedience is the gospel idea. Mere effusive affection, Christ seemed even to check, when he taught: "*He that hath my commandments and keepeth them,* he it is that loveth me." It was as if Christ had said: "Do not protest your affection. Convert your affection into obedience."

But Mr. Beecher had great faith in protestations of affection. How great, let this one following example of utterance, on his part, suffice to show. The passage to be quoted is, I doubt not, as sublime a thing in the passionate eloquence of mere sentiment, as the oratory of all the ages could produce. Mr. Beecher was in the midst of the most dreadful experience of his life. Sunday after Sunday, throughout that protracted agony of exposure and of suspense, this superhuman man stood in his pulpit and preached more as if the sky was serene over his head, than as if the elements about him were dissolving. I describe what was apparently the case. To the deeply considering mind, the particular passage now about to be shown is full of the interior personal passionate anguish of the speaker. Did ever, think you, before, out of the depths, a sinking soul send up a cry like this of hope refusing to despair?—a cry how intense, bursting into imaginative expression how splendid!

"When I come up before the Eternal Judge and say, all aglow: 'My Lord and my God,' will he turn to me and say: . . . 'You did not come up the right road; . . . go down.' I, to the face of Jehovah, will stand and say: 'God! I won't go to hell; I will go to heaven. I love Thee. Now damn me if thou canst. I love Thee." And God shall say, and the heavens flame with double and triple rainbows, and echo with joy: 'Dost thou love? Enter in and be forever blessed.' Let us pray."

Is it not the sublimity of audacity? And is it not the audacity of despair?

When the mind recovers itself and becomes undazzled from the blinding effect of such sudden magnificence in imagination, it perceives clearly that here is a highly rhetorical expression of what, throughout, is Mr. Beecher's gov-

erning thought, namely, that love as a sentiment, an emotion in distinction from love as obedience to God, is the ideal to aim at. I say nothing against this thought; I need, indeed, say nothing whatever about it, except that it is not the ideal presented in Scripture.

We have thus sufficiently answered the first of the two questions that we began by proposing to ourselves respecting Mr. Beecher,— namely, *What* was he? We find that — to make a not unreal, though a paradoxical distinction — he was a pulpit orator, but not a preacher.

Our second question asks, *How* was he such? What was the secret of his power?

To this, the first point of reply is, Genius. If ever in the world a man had the orator's genius, Mr. Beecher had it. I know that this is not analysis, but only avoidance of analysis, of the secret of Mr. Beecher's eloquence. It is nevertheless the first thing and the chief thing, necessary to be said. I fully believe that nowhere yet in the tide of time has there appeared on the planet a mightier master of men by speech than Henry Ward Beecher. Genius is the explanation, and the explanation does not explain. He did it because he could do it, and he could do it because he had the power, and the name of the power is genius.

But Mr. Beecher's genius had its own elements and its own accompaniments. What were these? One accompaniment was a well-attempered, wonderfully elastic, wonderfully responsive, body. This he cared for scrupulously, to maintain it at the highest point of effectiveness. His voice was a living instrument, in native power unsurpassed, and never impaired through ill-health in the owner. Every muscle of his flesh, every bone and nerve and sinew of his frame, the very blood in throat and cheek and brow, was absolutely obedient to the demand of the orator; and the demand of the orator was immense, for Mr. Beecher's instinct of mimicry was boundless. From long habit on Mr. Beecher's part, of absolute command over audiences, his face grew leonine in expression, and the leonine expression itself

was constantly more and more a means of such command. Audiences love to be mastered — by a master; and they easily recognize a master by his looks.

Such were the physical accompaniments of Mr. Beecher's oratoric genius. The elements of it, even to enumerate, were long. For what possible element was lacking? I know of none. Moral height? No, or at least apparently not — in his prime. Nay, his moral height, real or apparent, was one of the kingliest elements of his power. He swayed men, because he seemed to sway them from above. What an imagination was his! What an intelligence! And what a pair these twain made, working together! He took up, what masses of thought, and lifted them aloft, to what luminous heights! What light streamed on them, what colors played about them — where, like the white Alps in sunshine, they hung glittering, held in the hand of his power, for the delighted contemplation of men! His fancy, too, how beautiful and how sportive, it was! What blithe humor enlivened his speech! What exquisite pathos touched it to tears! Of various knowledge, what wealth! What range of all human sympathy! What infallible ready responsiveness to the feeling, infallibly divined, of the hearer! What easy flow of change from mood to mood! What unerring aim of retort, "incredible how swift!" What affluence of language, rolling out inexhaustibly, like an Atlantic set astream — affluence, not simply in words, but in constructions, endlessly different, and often surprisingly beautiful, as in a kaleidoscope! The greatest pulpit orator that the world ever saw — who might also have been the greatest preacher!

We have thus simply named some of the chief elements that entered into the extraordinary oratoric genius of Mr. Beecher. But side by side with genius in Mr. Beecher, sat another gift of his, worthy to be named as almost, if not quite, an equal power. I mean his common sense. Never before did so much common sense mate with so much genius, in any of the sons of men. The sails of genius in him, with

always a reef more to unfurl, could yet never spread wide enough to gather, in any strongest gale of inspiration, so much breath as to make the gait of the vessel through the sea one moment unsteady. The ballast of common sense was always sufficient to counterweigh what were else the over-buoyant headiness of genius.

This steadying effect from preternatural common sense was seen, not simply on any particular occasion, however unexpectedly trying the occasion might be, of Mr. Beecher's speaking. It was equally marked in the choice of a continuous oratoric line to be pursued, and indeed in the general conduct of affairs. His common sense enabled him both to guess instantaneously and infallibly the present temper of an audience, but also to read the signs of the times and know in season what course on his part would put him into the true current of popular tendency. He never wasted much time or strength in beating up against wind and tide. He felt for the current and found it. The stream of "evolution" had him at last for a conscious, not an unconscious, swimmer on its breast.

The undiscriminating admirers and disciples of Mr. Beecher will be scandalized at statements like these last. Such persons honestly suppose that Mr. Beecher was exactly the opposite of what is thus described. They will instinctively exclaim in protest: "Why, look at Mr. Beecher's career. What was it from beginning to end, but fighting against odds? He started in a western locality where vices such as drinking, gambling, licentiousness, ran riot, and he denounced them." Why, yes. What minister, what moralist, of the nineteenth century in America, would not have done the same? But he battled against slavery. Yes, in a North where the tide was already running strong against that iniquity. "He fought the anti-American wild beast demons in England during our Civil War." Yes, with splendid courage and with splendid skill. But the current that he thus stemmed there, was not, there even, the current that was to prevail, and well he knew it. This is not detraction

from Mr. Beecher's true merit; it is simple statement and interpretation of *fact*.

I repeat, Mr. Beecher felt for the current — perhaps I had better say, felt the current — and he found it, he thought, in "evolution." Into the current of evolutionary thought he threw himself during his closing years with complete self-abandonment. He thus did consciously what unconsciously he had been doing all his life. I heard once a distinguished disciple and defender of Beecher say he had himself come to believe that whatever tendency at a given moment was the prevailing tendency, was thereby proved to be the right tendency and he would not resist it. This is, I suppose, the legitimate logical stand for a consistent evolutionist to take; and the distinguished disciple and defender of Beecher to whom I refer seeks, I believe, to be a consistent evolutionist. To say then, of a given man, that he feels for the current to swim with it, ought, for that disciple and defender of Beecher at least, to be very much like simply saying of the man in question that he is a good evolutionist.

It was the union and equality of genius and common sense in Mr. Beecher, which made him the popular leader that he was — or that he seemed. His genius alone might have separated him from the people and prevented his leading them, or at least prevented his seeming to lead them. But his common sense harnessed him to them. In what other man ever was the superiority of genius so effaced by the universal fellowship and equality of common sense?

Was Mr. Beecher's taste a trait of his genius or of his common sense? For taste in Mr. Beecher was only less remarkable than his other intellectual gifts. It was not an unerring taste, it was not a supremely controlling taste. But the teeming luxuriance of Mr. Beecher's mind being considered, and the tropical heat of his temperament, with the fact besides of his uttering himself so profusely, and on occasions often so exciting and so preclusive of ripe premeditation — all this, I say, being considered, the freedom of Mr. Beecher from sins against good taste must be

reckoned remarkable. There was a strain of infinite delicacy in the poetic element of his genius, which guarded him at this point; and his common sense too had a fineness that was almost equivalent to good taste. It was generally his humor that sinned, when the sin was esthetic. But I have no doubt that his virtue of repression here was greater than most men's, by as much as his humorous temptation was greater.

It was an instinct of taste, an innate sense of propriety, far more than it was any strict educational culture, which kept Mr. Beecher's diction, on the whole so pure and so correct. His felicity of diction was another matter. That was a gift of his genius. I have lately been reading his volume of sermons on "Evolution and Religion"— with the utmost repudiation for its teaching and with the utmost admiration for the intellectual power displayed. I do not hesitate to say that Goethe, for example, at an equal age, showed incomparably less breadth of mental grasp, incomparably less splendor of poetic imagination. Amid the opulence of language at the speaker's command, how rarely a note of verbal infelicity is struck! "Sectaries" for "sects," in one place, "cure," as if the word meant "minister," instead of the "minister's office," were exceptional, almost solitary, slips observed. "Teleologic," misused as if it meant chronologically final, occurs in another volume of sermons.

Of course, one always describes somewhat ideally in describing a man of genius. Mr. Beecher was by no means invariably at his best. He also had to fall back on habit, or even occasionally on trick, when his inspiration failed him. He privately told a young preacher once, who told the present writer, "If you can't think of anything to say, bawl." There were times when Mr. Beecher himself practiced on his own precept. But it was seldom indeed that he failed of something to say which did not need to be "bawled." It was no bawling, but real detonation of thunder carrying thunderbolt, when, upon occasion, after running along for a time on a slender line of vocal sound — and then, perhaps, with

finally an ominous pause interposed — he would deliver a sudden, hard, loud clap of voice that startled you like a blow. I remember witnessing in Plymouth Church now many years ago a remarkable effect of this sort. A woman sat near me eyeing the speaker in fixed and eager attention. Mr. Beecher reached a point of climax to be emphasized, when he paused and stood silent, visibly gathering the eloquent blood into his throat, his cheeks, his temples, until it seemed as if they must burst with the pressure. Then he exploded his voice, with a moral, not a physical, effect so terrific, that the woman to whom I have referred, involuntarily, with an audible exclamation, hid her face in her hands as if from a blinding flash of lightning. If *that* had been a "bawl," the effect would have been physical, not moral, and the woman would then have clapped her hands to her ears instead of to her eyes.

My subject is endless, but my paper must not be, and I shall have to crowd one thing upon another in some confusion. Every habitual public speaker must have, consciously or unconsciously, some system of truth or of theory to serve him as a sort of framework to his habitual thought; and Mr. Beecher had his. Theology, as a system to serve for such framework, he despised and spurned. In place of theology he took up — phrenology. No one can wisely read Mr. Beecher without distinct knowledge of this fact as a clue for his guidance through the maze. Mr. Beecher's sermons might, many of them, be regarded as popular lectures in applied phrenology, that is, phrenology applied to the conduct of life, or rather to the "reconstruction" of "manhood." He was constantly talking, in the phrenological sense, of the "higher" and the "lower" "ranges" of feeling. If he had occasion to speak of pride, it would very likely be by simply naming its phrenological location at "the top of the head."

I trust that I shall seem to have rendered to Mr. Beecher's magnificent gifts a not grudging ascription of praise. I have limited myself, as, from self-evident propriety of pres-

ent purpose, was desirable, to considering Mr. Beecher as preacher. He did a great deal of orator's work outside of the pulpit, as miscellaneous and political lecturer. The standing-place was then different, but the man and the teaching were essentially the same. If he did not use the platform as a pulpit, he practiced the converse of this, and made of the pulpit a platform. Except for certain accessories of the sermon, the sermon was not widely different from the lecture or the speech.

Mr. Beecher's historic place and opportunity were much, very much, to his career. He appeared at the very moment when a voice proclaiming freedom of every sort, a jubilee of "unrestrained will"— I quote his own remarkable phrase used by him to describe a leading characteristic of his ideal man — at the very moment, I say, when a voice proclaiming this was the sweetest music that the uneasy ear of a restless and rebellious generation could possibly hear. It happened, too, to be a moment when freedom of a certain sort was the thing most of all *needed,* as well as desired. But freedom that we did *not* need, however much we desired it, freedom from the binding force of obligation to obey God, as God speaks authoritatively in his holy word, this insurrection of "unrestrained will," was unhappily also involved in that audacious scheme of human independence, of which nearly every lecture or sermon of Mr. Beecher's was a more or less open manifesto. He told men to be good and noble — according to their own higher feelings. Above all things else, do as you please — still, please to be noble. Nothing is "obligatory," but goodness is a great privilege. Love and you need not obey.

A delightful gospel, and Mr. Beecher preached it delightfully. It is not indeed the gospel of Christ; but it pleased men, for it taught men to please themselves.

Mr. Beecher's work may be summed up in the one statement that he powerfully reinforced a human tendency, already overwhelmingly strong, moving in the direction of "unrestrained will." What the age needed was a MASTER.

What the age wanted, was "unrestrained will." Mr. Beecher offered it what it wanted, and not what it needed. The work of any man who does that, splendid howsoever in seeming it be, must be very wastefully winnowed from if not even altogether "burned up" before the time of the consummation foretold, when "to HIM every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father."

II

THOMAS DE WITT TALMAGE

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

It is right to say, in preface to the following criticism, that it did not command the approval of the distinguished subject of it. I have under my hand as I write these words an autograph letter from him in which, without descending to any specifications of error in statement, he pronounces the paper in question briefly and comprehensively "a lie." The letter referred to was written in answer to a request from the publishers of the periodical in which the criticism appeared — a request such as was sent alike to each one of all the preachers still living that were criticised — that he would kindly point out any mistake in statement of fact concerning him into which the critic might inadvertently have fallen. Dr. Talmage further says in the same letter: "An elaborate article with dates and pages of history stated was sent me just after the scurrilous stuff was printed, showing that I was right in every case and the author in the 'Homiletic' was wrong. But I never printed the reply." I thought it only fair that Dr. Talmage should enjoy whatever benefit might result to him from my readers' seeing his energetic repudiation of the criticism here to follow, as also the manner in which he supports that repudiation. It should be added that the statements copied from "The Sun" newspaper, in the criticism as was given, could have had no part in exciting the indignant denial from Dr. Talmage of all truth to the criticism — for the simple reason that those statements were not contained in the criticism as first published.

"The Homiletic Review," presumably by way of furnishing a counterweight to the criticism, very good-naturedly

published soon after a highly laudatory article on Dr. Talmage which, I make no doubt, he could accept as more closely approximating the real truth in the case.

Whatever may have been the false statements or false judgments contained in the criticism, they lacked one element at least necessary to constitute a "lie"; there was, on the part of the critic, no intention to deceive. The quite friendly, though to be sure not wholly admiring, spirit in which the critic approached in this case his task, may perhaps best be shown by reproducing here a few paragraphs from an article which I printed at the time in a newspaper, descriptive of the occasion when I went to hear Dr. Talmage, for the express purpose of preparing myself better to do him justice in the criticism then about to be written. On that occasion I could not but be preoccupied with the thought of the phenomenon confronting me, and I began my description with certain reflections that were forced upon my mind; and here, in part, is what I wrote:

Dr. Talmage has a more numerous hearing than any other preacher whatever on the American continent. If readers, too, were to be counted hearers, of a preacher, it would be necessary to say that Dr. Talmage's audience is quite the most numerous in the world. I was told by a man who ought to know, that six hundred different newspapers regularly print his sermons, and that the carefully calculated number of his regular readers may be rounded off at an aggregate of fourteen millions. You may reduce this staggering estimate by one-half, and you will still have a sufficiently imposing sum total. Mr. Spurgeon's hearing cannot probably equal it; and certainly that of no other preacher since the world began has ever approached such a figure.

The wise student of eloquence may well be seriously disposed to inquire what is the secret of popular acceptance so

remarkable. After two decades of years, during which the increase of public attention to a preacher has been steadily maintained, it is, indeed, perhaps not too late still to raise the question, Is he worthy to be thus heeded? But it is more modest, and not less likely to be useful, to raise, rather, the question, How have these phenomenal results been produced? I do not attempt here to answer the question, but it is a question which I should like to see satisfactorily answered.

The fact that Dr. Talmage is read by such numbers of people is proof that the charm of his discourse does not reside wholly in the delivery. But then, that his delivery must also possess its merits is shown by the fact that, likewise, so many come to hear. It is, in truth, my judgment that the virtues of the matter are pretty evenly balanced against the virtues of the manner in Dr. Talmage.

The preacher's voice is not, as, for instance, with Mr. Spurgeon is the case, a rich and rare instrument of music, sweet in tone and with a wide sweep of compass. It is, on the contrary, a somewhat harsh, a singularly inflexible, and a prevailingly monotonous, organ of utterance. There is no pathos in it. The lack of this is a great denial of nature to any orator. On the score of voice, the odds is thus heavy against Dr. Talmage. But he compensates by force and distinctness of speech. Everybody in the Tabernacle can hear every word he speaks. He is said to have an exceptionally large proportion of hearers whose sense of hearing is defective — this class of persons being drawn to his audience by their prospect of not losing the sermon.

With such report, however, as to what is in general the fact about the make-up of Dr. Talmage's audience, the aspect of that particular evening's congregation by no means corresponded. For the aspect was remarkably youthful. Few gray hairs were to be seen. I cast my eye around thoughtfully to calculate the average age of the audience. I enlisted

a judicious friend by my side in the same undertaking. He was willing to make his guess thirty years. I, for my part, was not ready to go over twenty-five. The very young were very numerous in the audience. I was profoundly impressed with the responsibility resting on the preacher; "the fair young planet" in such proportion sat there to be molded under his plastic hand!

It is reassuring to feel, as one confidently may, that the influence exerted is in great part safe and wholesome. The real gospel of Christ gets preached in the Brooklyn Tabernacle. A powerful impulse is imparted to send those thousands of minds and hearts and consciences to the one true Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is the old, old gospel, ever new, that is there proclaimed, unmixed and untainted from the current wisdom of the world. Thank God for that!

It were, however, a farther occasion of devout thankfulness to God, if Dr. Talmage felt, more deeply than he seems to do, his responsibility to guard himself in what he says incidentally, in his *obiter dicta,* to use a phrase of the courts. His text on this occasion was from Job — "Like as a shock of corn cometh in, in his season." "I was born in the country," said the preacher, "and I never got over it." He imported country odors and savors into his discourse. He described the harvest-field alive with the bustle of the husking-bee. I did not refrain from whispering to the friend at my side: "He is committing over again his old mistake, for which he was criticised. He is confounding the 'corn' of his text with the Indian maize of this country." Almost as if he had overheard the remark, Dr. Talmage, leaving his standing-place, walked off spiritedly to one side, and said: "A few years ago, I spoke from the pulpit of Indian corn in Palestine. A fool in the papers took me to task for committing a blunder. The fact, however, is, that in the wrappings of a mummy some kernels of our own Indian corn were once

found. These brought to this country were planted, and they produced a crop. This settles the matter of the possibility that there should have been Indian corn in Palestine. So you see I was right, and my critic was wrong!"

Such information from Dr. Talmage might astound the masters in vegetable biology, but, for the moment, it probably satisfied the great majority of his congregation. There cannot, however, fail to follow a heavy abatement from the eventual influence of Dr. Talmage on his hearers — when they find, as many of them inevitably will find, that their religious teacher was so very rash and fallible, not to say reckless, a guide in matters, apart from the gospel, on which he ventured gratuitously to speak. (Also the word "fool" was not in the tone proper to the place, the office, the hour, the theme. It smacked quite too much of personal self-regard on the preacher's part, and of the spirit of the world in "reviling.") The American Cyclopedia says: "The stories of 'mummy wheat,' which is said to have germinated after remaining thousands of years in the tombs of Egypt, are now discredited; *the cunning Arabs have even supplied credulous travelers with mummied maize grains,* and dahlia tubers, *neither of which were known before the discovery of America.*"

The vitality of Dr. Talmage is remarkable. He gives his hearers plenty of what hearers invariably like best of all from speakers, that is, "life." The matter and the manner both are instinct with vitality. Dr. Talmage has grown a solid, substantial, stalwart, physical man in these latter years. He apparently will not soon wear out. His sanguine, buoyant temperament, too, is in his favor. I wish he could find it in him rather to take correction than to call one who offers correction a "fool." But the probability is that we shall have always to take the large amount of admirable that there is in this strong man, offset with a permanently undiminished

deduction of — the not-so-admirable. Let us rejoice that, after all necessary subtraction is made, there still redounds so considerable a remainder of good.

So I ended the brief paper descriptive of that one particular occasion on which I heard Dr. Talmage from his own Tabernacle pulpit. I have shown here what I then wrote, not only for the intrinsic interest that may be found in it, but also as indicative of the spirit, friendly if not uncritical, in which I approached the treatment of my subject in the following paper.

THOMAS DE WITT TALMAGE

"BROUGHAM is a thunderbolt." So, thunderbolt-fashion, began a passage of description which, a generation or more ago, used to meet the eye of the student in his "Porter's Rhetorical Reader." The piece was a selection descriptive of the style of eloquence displayed in Parliament by the famous English orator thus startlingly introduced.

To begin similarly here, Talmage is a phenomenon. A phenomenon of success he certainly is, whether or not he be a phenomenon of eloquence. Nobody can wink out of sight the blazing fact that he is, and that for years he has been, the most widely-heard preacher on the American continent; nay, with one doubtful exception, the most widely-heard preacher in the world. He inherited Mr. Beecher, while Mr. Beecher was still living, and while that wonderful "old man eloquent" still preached with singularly little diminution of his pristine power. Dr. Talmage did not indeed inherit Mr. Beecher's preeminence in the quality, but only in the quantity — the quantity, however, augmented — of audience commanded. If you had counted the heads of Dr. Talmage's hearers (I reckon as "hearers" the readers of Dr. Talmage's sermons), in comparison with those of Mr. Beecher's, numbered at whatever point you might choose in the highest prosperity of the latter's career, Dr. Talmage's majority would have been immense. If you had weighed the brains, comparatively, of the two audiences, the disparity, I judge, would have been equally immense in favor of Mr. Beecher.

It seems to be by some marvelous, almost preternatural, chord in himself, of intelligence and of feeling, with the overwhelming and outnumbering *average* majority of the human race, that Dr. Talmage wins and keeps his hold on

the popular mind and heart. He does not estrange or repel by difference or by superiority. That, Mr. Beecher also did not do. Mr. Beecher's superiority and his difference fascinated and attracted. But the fascinating and attracting force in Dr. Talmage is rather the friendly, free-hearted hail and invitation that he sends out to everybody, bidding welcome all alike to feast with himself in perfect equality and good fellowship. He has vitality enough, and complaisance enough, supported by enough of self-complacency, to do this without its seeming otherwise than natural and practicable. The world accordingly takes Dr. Talmage at his word, and throngs to the banquet that he spreads. This is not the most delicate, perhaps, not the most dainty, of refections; but there is at least always enough, and to spare, and a smiling welcome from the host makes every guest feel himself at home.

If you listen to Dr. Talmage, as you always do so in numerous company, you are, in one way or another, invariably interested. But if you are a homiletic student, or a homiletic professor, hungry for practical hints bearing on your vocation, you are likely to supply your note-book with memoranda suggestive rather of things to be shunned than of things to be emulated. One thing admirable, however, you at once find to be very clearly pronounced in this orator. Dr. Talmage fulfils the first indispensable condition of successful public discourse in making himself heard. Every word, every syllable, from his lips comes to you intelligible to the ear.

Beyond this, what feature is there of Dr. Talmage's elocution that you would seek to reproduce? Well, truth to say, hardly one. For that abounding vitality which beats its strong pulse throughout this speaking, is more an attribute of the man than of the orator. It is less the oratory heard by you, than it is the robust physical health, the plenteous physical energy, the free-flowing vital force felt in this personal presence, that so touches you, and so quickens you, with the pleasurable sensation of life. However, to be all-

alive, and superfluously alive, also to be absolutely audible in your enunciation, these are two points in which you may wisely desire and endeavor to resemble Dr. Talmage.

But Dr. Talmage's habit of facial distortion — is that good? Facial gesture is good; for the face may be a vivid pantomime to accompany, illumine, and enforce your speech. In fact, the face should be such — nay, such in a measure the face will infallibly be, if you have learned art enough to be perfectly natural. But facial gesture is not the same as facial distortion. Facial distortion tends to fix the features, or to twitch them, in a certain habitual way. Facial gesture requires, and it encourages, absolute mobility of feature. Mobility, not distortion, not even gesture, should be the habit of the orator's face. The face then can rest placid in comparative repose, if the tenor of discourse make that fittest; or, with equal ease, can fluently play into any expression that best answers the spirit of what is said.

Dr. Talmage's occasional tragic stride across his platform — what is to be thought of that? Well, that, too, has fallen into a habit with him. What might have been a gesture, a powerful occasional gesture, has degenerated into a mere meaningless bodily exercise. A *trick* of oratoric behavior, one could not properly call it; for a trick is a piece of conscious artifice; and Dr. Talmage's start and stride need not be charged with that character. The worst that need be said of the action has already been said, that it has become a meaningless habit — meaningless, and, therefore, hurtful to oratoric effect. Everything that the orator does — posture, gesture, tone — should tell, and tell for his purpose. But the appearance, in Dr. Talmage's case, is often as if the speaker came to a point in his discourse at which he felt that his audience, or perhaps that he himself, would be the better for something to impart a little effect of enlivenment. The instinctive resort then is to a sudden gesture, a somewhat violent gesture, very likely a springing promenade the length of the platform. There is oftenest no discernible relation, other than that which has now been hinted, between

the gesture and the particular thing said accompanied by the gesture. Such gesticulation is to be avoided. It would, perhaps, have been very well to write something into the discourse that naturally required the action; but to give the action, without the something requiring it — that, at best, is futile. But, as has been said, it is worse than futile, since it prevents the action, when appropriately employed, from being effective. Besides this, all mere meaningless *habits* of delivery insensibly accustom hearers not to attach significance to anything they see in the speaker, or hear from him.

The same remarks apply, or, at least, the principle of them does, to the sharp changes in rate, or key, or force, of utterance, observable in Dr. Talmage's elocution. These changes are not frequent — on the contrary, the tenor of utterance is faultily monotonous; but when they do occur, they seem to have the same motive, and they are characterized by the same unrelatedness, as have been attributed to the corresponding habits of gesticulation. That Dr. Talmage should not have the sweet, rich, flexible voice of Spurgeon, for example, with that Eolian attachment in it for pathos — this, of course, is a denial to him from nature, for which he is not responsible. The defect may be noted, but it ought not to be criticised. Even the voice, however, at length learns to express, with growing degrees of fitness, the sentiments and emotions most natural, most habitual, and profoundest, in its possessor.

So much for the manner. The manner certainly, in Dr. Talmage's case, does not make the man. It is not because of his manner, it is in spite of his manner, that the man succeeds. The writer once heard a sincere admirer of this preacher say that he did not like to look at Dr. Talmage while listening to his sermon. "I would rather read him," the same gentleman added, "than hear him." From Dr. Talmage's manner, then, let us go to his matter, and make some study of that.

The first thing that strikes you here is Dr. Talmage's

orthodoxy. This preacher does not trim his sails to catch the breeze that blows from the breath of the "liberal" in religion. If there were to be suspected any trimming at all of the sails, it would be rather to catch favoring breath from strict, straightforward, old-fashioned Christian believers. No "advanced" religious views, of whatever sort, get the smallest countenance from Dr. Talmage. He is perfectly square-toed and flat-footed in pronouncing for the faith exactly as it was once delivered to the saints; and that faith, according to Dr. Talmage, is well enough expressed in the definitions of evangelical orthodoxy, uninfluenced by the speculations of "progressive" theologians. No doubt it is this staunch fidelity, on Dr. Talmage's part, to the old gospel that has so won Mr. Spurgeon's heart, drawing from the great English preacher those warm commendations of his American brother in the ministry.

The next thing that impresses you in Dr. Talmage's sermons is their directly evangelical aim. This preaching is not an end in itself, but a means to an end beyond itself; and that end is to save the souls of men, by persuading them to simple trust in the one, all-sufficient, atoning Redeemer. The relation of adaptedness in the means used to the end sought, may not always be clear; but the end itself, at least, is always clear. And for a preacher to have that end, and to make that end clear, is much. This condition alone, fulfilled in Dr. Talmage, goes a long way toward solving the problem of his success.

Advancing beyond these two salient, most salient, features of Dr. Talmage's sermons, namely, their orthodoxy and their evangelical character, what do you next find? What you next find depends much upon you, the finder. If you are one sort of man, you will find next — a fertile imagination, and a vivid. You will say: "Dr. Talmage describes so beautifully, calls up such images, makes such life-like scenes pass in vision before me." If you are a different kind of man, harder to please, more critical, trained in a nicer school of taste, familiar with more classic models, you will shake

your head and say: "There is no real imagination here, only a wild, unbridled fancy. I see no picture presented anywhere, nothing but splashes of bright color, laid on without form, mingled without harmony. It is confusion worse confounded."

These two observers, it was said, find different things. But the different things found are, after all, the same thing seen differently and differently named. Certain it is that an ostensibly pictorial and scenic style is a very marked peculiarity of Dr. Talmage's preaching. Such imaginative quality is good, if it be genuine. Is it genuine, or is it spurious with Dr. Talmage?

Take a fair specimen, and apply a fair test. The text of the sermon is: "Thy word is a lamp." "How will all these scenes of iniquity in our cities be overcome?" the preacher asks. ("Scenes" are sometimes "overcoming"; but hardly are they things to be "overcome.") "Send the Bible down that filthy alley, if you would have it cleansed," is part of his answer. But the Bible was a "lamp," to spread light, not a river Alpheus, to "cleanse." "Send it against those decanters, if you would have them smashed." But the Bible was a "lamp," not a missile — club, for instance, or stone. "Send it through all the ignorance of the city, if you would have it illumined as by a flash of heaven's morning. The Bible can do it, and will do it." Such are the next sentences in order. Here the Bible is a "lamp," as it ought to have been throughout. But even here that propriety of conception which true imagination instinctively produces, is wanting. For "ignorance" is not a thing to be "illumined," but, like darkness, a thing to be dispelled. Darkness does not stay to be "illumined" by the morning sun. It disappears before the morning sun; and that is what should have been conceived as happening to "ignorance," under the influence of the Bible as a "lamp." But the next succeeding sentence caps the climax: "Gather all the ignorance and the wickedness and the vice of our cities in one great pile — Alps above Alps, Pyrenees above Pyrenees, Himalaya above

Himalaya — and then give one little New Testament full swing against the side of that mountain, and down it will come, Alps after Alps, Pyrenees after Pyrenees, Himalaya after Himalaya." The word "swing" suggests that perhaps the preacher here conceived the "New Testament" as wielded like a form of the ancient battering-ram, against the supposed "pile," to overthrow it. But the conception may have been that the "little" volume was as a smooth stone from the brook flung from David's sling. One finds it impossible to be sure. By the way, are the three different classes of mountains, Alps, Pyrenees, Himalayas, to be imagined, as piled Pyrenees on Alps, and then Himalayas on Pyrenees? If so, the idea is not expressed, and if *not* so, why is the aggregate mass called "that mountain," in the singular number? Again, if so, the toppling down of the mountain would take place in the reverse order, Himalaya falling first instead of last — which also would happily allow the pleasing figure of chiasm to be employed in the construction of the sentence.

Now who would have conjectured that this mountainous rhetoric of the preacher's was suggested by the metaphor of the text, "Thy word is a *lamp?*" The sense conveyed is all good and sound and wholesome. The way in which the sense is conveyed — that is the only distressing thing about the matter. But we, perhaps, concede too much in conceding that the sense is unobjectionable. For who can be entirely sure what the sense is? One would like to see Dr. Talmage put in a corner, to be kept there till he should set down in strictly literal language exactly what he meant by saying that "one little New Testament" given "full swing" against the accumulated moral evil of "our great cities" would tumble it all down. Did he mean that there would be no moral evil "in our great cities," if there was but perfect obedience in them to the New Testament precepts? Then he might have made both his statement more sweeping and his contrast more striking. He might have said that there could be no moral evil left in the *universe,* if "one

little" *text* only of the New Testament, namely, the Golden Rule, for example, were everywhere obeyed.

The fact is, Dr. Talmage does not take care enough to think truly and to speak truly. This is evident in particulars that possess greater moral importance than do points of propriety in rhetorical figure. Naught to extenuate, as also to exaggerate naught — Dr. Talmage is incredibly careless in his statements, his incidental statements, those *obiter dicta* which he was not bound to furnish at all, but which, if he did furnish them, he was bound to make reasonably exact. Adequately to illustrate this would require a large amount of room. Only a few examples can be admitted here. But, let it be understood, the fault thus found with Dr. Talmage is a fault whose name is legion; for it cries out, almost as with a voice, and, using the plural of majesty, says: "We are many." The references in the present paper are all to Dr. Talmage's latest volume of sermons, that numbered "fourth." This collection may be supposed best to represent the preacher as he now is. On p. 321, Dr. Talmage says: "Charles Lamb could not endure Coleridge." He might nearly as well have said: "Harmodius could not endure Aristogeiton," "Damon could not endure Pythias," "David could not endure Jonathan." It was possible for Dr. Talmage very easily to check his misleading memory, on a point of biographical history like that. If he had but glanced at Allibone's "Dictionary of Authors," he would have found Coleridge called Lamb's "most dearly loved friend." The "International Cyclopedia" would have spoken to him of the "affectionate intimacy" between the two men; the "Encyclopedia Britannica," of their "close and tender life-long friendship." "Waller warred against Cowley," says Dr. Talmage. The encyclopedias know nothing of this state of belligerency between the two royalist poets. Johnson, in his "Lives of the Poets," is equally silent on the subject. Dr. Talmage says: "The hatred of Plato and Xenophon is as immortal as their works." Such mutual hatred, until Dr. Talmage divulged it, was an ex-

traordinarily well-kept secret between the two haters. The inaccuracies now noted appropriately cluster on a single page and in a single paragraph.

"You are unsatisfied," Dr. Talmage says, p. 313, "because you do not know who Junius was — whether John Horne Tooke, or *Bishop Butler,* or Edmund Burke." Bishop Butler — that is, the only man in history identified by that title — died in 1752. It was 1769 when the first "letter" of Junius was published. And Sir Philip Francis, almost certainly the true "Junius," not mentioned!

On p. 306, Dr. Talmage says:

"I give you the appalling statistic [*sic*] that in the last twenty-five years, laying aside last year — the statistics of which I have not yet seen — within the last twenty-five years the churches of God in this country have averaged less than two conversions a year each. There has been an average of four or five deaths in the churches. . . . We gain two, we lose four."

Here is an appearance of unwonted scruple on the preacher's part. He excepts a year, and takes pains to say that he does so. But what a result proclaimed! Does Dr. Talmage really think that the American Christian churches have during twenty-five years steadily lost in numbers more than twice what they have gained? A yearly net loss of two members or more to a church would mean a serious yearly *percentage* of loss — hardly less than two per cent probably. This continuing uninterruptedly twenty-five years, would reduce the numerical strength of the American churches by near one half. Does Dr. Talmage, we ask again, really think that there are only about half as many Christian professors now in this country as there were twenty-five years ago? The preacher should have thought this thing out more conscientiously. There is nothing more needful for the pulpit than to cultivate the *habit* of truthfulness.

On pp. 294, 295, occurs this interrogative sentence: "What ruined the merchant princes of Tyre, that great city of fairs and bazaars and palaces; her vessels of trade, with cedar

masts and embroidered sails and ivory benches, driven by fierce blasts on northern waters, and then dropping down on glassy Indian seas; bringing wine from Helbon, and chariot-cloths from Dedan, and gold and spices from Rahmah, and emerald and agate from Syria; her waters foaming with innumerable keels," etc. A rich sentence, well fitted to make a strong impression of ample knowledge and pictorial power possessed by its author, but — inaccurate. Those "vessels of trade," "innumerable keels," did not "bring wine from Helbon," Helbon (near Damascus) being situated far from the seaboard, and transportation between Damascus and Tyre being exclusively overland. "Dedan" is not the name of a place, but rather a tribal designation — the Dedanites being caravan merchants, not maritime. From Rahmah, too, the carriage was overland to Tyre.

It is hardly necessary to say that such a preacher as has here been described, will commit offences against good taste, will even sometimes wound reverent feeling. Dr. Talmage, on p. 40, makes "corn" a symbol of the bread of God. But corn must be "threshed and ground and baked," he says. Dr. Talmage makes his allegory go on all fours, to the extent of saying, "When Jesus descended into hell, and the flames of the lost world wrapped him all about, was not the corn baked?" The revised version, with "Sheol," or "Hades," for "hell," should have saved Dr. Talmage from *that* dreadful rhetoric — and from that sad unintentional heterodoxy as well. From many, however, of his lapses in propriety, nothing except surer taste and finer feeling could save Dr. Talmage.

It will be fair to Dr. Talmage, and it will be variously interesting to various classes of minds among my readers, to show now, without interruption of comment or criticism, a somewhat extended passage of this celebrated preacher's discourse, in which he appears at his highest and best, that is, his most triumphantly flamboyant rhetoric in description and exclamation. I quote from a sermon of his, said, in the newspaper in which it appears, to have been delivered

at "Brooklyn Tabernacle," Sept. 22, 1889. The title is, "From Ocean to Ocean," the text being "He shall have dominion from sea to sea":

"But the most wonderful part of this American continent is the Yellowstone Park. My visit there last month made upon me an impression that will last forever. After all poetry has exhausted itself, and all the Morans and Bierstadts and the other enchanting artists have completed their canvas, there will be other revelations to make and other stories of its beauty and wrath, splendor and agony, to be recited. The Yellowstone Park is the geologist's paradise. By cheapening of travel may it become the nation's playground! In some portions of it there seems to be the anarchy of the elements. Fire and water, and the vapor born of that marriage terrific. Geyser cones or hills of crystal that have been over five thousand years growing. In places the earth, throbbing, sobbing, groaning, quaking with aqueous paroxysm. At the expiration of every sixty-five minutes one of the geysers tossing its boiling water 185 feet in the air and then descending into swinging rainbows. Caverns with pictured walls large enough for the sepulchre of the human race. Formations of stone in shape and color of calla lily, of heliotrope, of rose, of cowslip, of sun-flower and of gladiolus. Sulphur and arsenic and oxide of iron, with their delicate pencils, turning the hills into a Luxembourg or a Vatican picture gallery. The so-called Thanatopsis Geyser, exquisite as the Bryant poem it was named after, and the so-called Evangeline Geyser, lovely as the Longfellow heroine it commemorates. The so-called Pulpit Terrace from its white elevation preaching mightier sermons of God than human lips ever uttered. The so-called Bethesda Geyser, by the warmth of which invalids have already been cured, the Angel of Health continually stirring the waters. Enraged craters, with heat at five hundred degrees, only a little below the surface.

"Wide reaches of stone of intermingled colors, blue as the sky, green as the foliage, crimson as the dahlia, white as the snow, spotted as the leopard, tawny as the lion, grizzly as the bear, in circles, in angles, in stars, in coronets, in stalactites, in stalagmites. Here and there are petrified growths, or the dead trees and vegetation of other ages, kept through a process

of natural embalmment. In some places waters as innocent and smiling as a child making a first attempt to walk from its mother's lap, and not far off as foaming and frenzied and ungovernable as a maniac in murderous struggle with his keepers.

"But after you have wandered along the geyserite enchantment for days and begin to feel that there can be nothing more of interest to see, you suddenly come upon the peroration of all majesty and grandeur, the Grand Canyon. It was here that it seems to me — and I speak it with reverence — Jehovah seems to have surpassed Himself. It seems a great gulch let down into the eternities. Here, hung up and let down and spread abroad, are all the colors of land and sea and sky. Upholstering of the Lord God Almighty! Best work of the Architect of worlds! Sculpturing by the Infinite! Masonry by an omnipotent trowel! Yellow! You never saw yellow unless you saw it there. Red! You never saw red unless you saw it there. Violet! You never saw violet unless you saw it there. Triumphant banners of color. In the cathedral of basalt, Sunrise and Sunset married by the setting rainbow ring.

"Gothic arches, Corinthian capitals and Egyptian basilicas built before human architecture was born. Huge fortifications of granite constructed before war forged its first cannon. Gibraltars and Sebastopols that never can be taken. Alhambras, where kings of strength and queens of beauty reigned long before the first earthly crown was empearled. Thrones upon which no one but the King of Heaven and earth ever sat. Font of waters at which the lesser hills are baptized while the giant cliffs stand round as sponsors. For thousands of years before that scene was unveiled to human sight, the elements were busy, and the geysers were hewing away with their hot chisel, and glaciers were pounding with their cold hammers, and hurricanes were cleaving with their lightning strokes, and hailstones giving the finishing touches, and after all these forces of nature had done their best, in our century the curtain dropped and the world had a new and divinely inspired revelation, the Old Testament written on papyrus, the New Testament written on parchment, and now this last Testament written on the rocks.

"Hanging over one of the cliffs I looked off until I could not get my breath, then retreating to a less exposed place I

looked down again. Down there is a pillar of rock that in certain conditions of the atmosphere looks like a pillar of blood. Yonder are fifty feet of emerald on a base of five hundred feet of opal. Wall of chalk resting on pedestals of beryl. Turrets of light tumbling on floors of darkness. The brown brightening into golden. Snow of crystal melting into fire of carbuncle. Flaming red cooling into russet. Cold blue warming into saffron. Dull gray kindling into solferino. Morning twilight flushing midnight shadows. Auroras crouching among rocks.

"Yonder is an eagle's nest on a shaft of basalt. Through an eyeglass we see it among the young eagles, but the stoutest arm of our group cannot hurl a stone near enough to disturb the feathered domesticity. Yonder are heights that would be chilled with horror but for the warm robe of forest foliage with which they are enwrapped. Altars of worship at which nations might kneel. Domes of chalcedony on temples of porphyry. See all this carnage of color up and down the cliffs; it must have been the battlefield of the war of the elements. Here are all the colors of the wall of Heaven, neither the sapphire nor the chrysolite nor the topaz nor the jacinth, nor the amethyst nor the jasper nor the twelve gates of twelve pearls, wanting. If spirits bound from earth to Heaven could pass up by way of this canyon, the dash of heavenly beauty would not be so overpowering. It would only be from glory to glory. Ascent through such earthly scenery in which the crystal is so bright and the red so flaming would be fit preparation for the 'sea of glass mingled with fire.'

"Standing there in the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone Park on the morning of August 9, for the most part we held our peace, but after a while it flashed upon me with such power I could not help but say to my comrades: 'What a Hall this would be for the last Judgment!' See that mighty cascade with the rainbows at the foot of it. Those waters congealed and transfixed with the agitations of that day, what a place they would make for the shining feet of the Judge of quick and dead. And those rainbows look now like the crowns to be cast at His feet. At the bottom of this great canyon is a floor on which the nations of the earth might stand, and all up and down these galleries of rock the nations of Heaven might sit.

And what reverberation of archangels' trumpets there would be through all these gorges and from all these caverns and over all these heights. Why should not the greatest of all the days the world shall ever see, close amid the grandest scenery Omnipotence ever built?"

The most of the discourse is pitched in the same key of intense exclamatory rhetoric. Now, on the one hand, to pronounce such strains of extravaganza truly admirable, as, on the other hand, to deny that they display great resources of descriptive "eloquence" on the part of the author, would be to commit two faults of critical estimate about equally foolish. But how do long passages of description like the foregoing find their fit place in a sermon? No problem more easy for Dr. Talmage to solve. A country that contains such things should be reclaimed to God! "Oh, the sweep of the American continent!" exclaims the preacher, midway in his discourse. "America for God!" he exclaims at the very close.

I took care to say, "*Said* . . . to have been delivered." For, although in this particular case there is no reason to doubt the fact stated, Dr. Talmage's practice in publishing his sermons is such that it would not be safe always to trust implicitly the statement of time and place given for their delivery. "The Sun" newspaper, of New York City, Feb. 16, 1890, in an article devoted to Dr. Talmage covering almost an entire page of the sheet, risked a suit for libel from him (which, so far as I know, he never brought) by making the following statements:

"Before he left America Talmage prepared a series of sermons, one for each Sunday during his absence, which he arranged should be sent out to 500 newspapers from week to week, and should be printed as having been delivered in the most prominent spot near which his itinerary indicated he should be on the respective Sundays of his journey. Furthermore, it was arranged that the papers should print these sermons under date of the various places where they were supposed to be delivered, and that they

should appear as cabled reports. Here, then, is presented an astonishing spectacle! A minister of the Gospel, foremost in the pulpit of his country, in the opinion of many, becomes a party to a fraud and an imposition upon the public! Here is a sample of the form in which Talmage's served-in-advance sermons appeared in American newspapers:

TALMAGE IN LONDON

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE PREACHES TO AN ENGLISH AUDIENCE

ON HIS WAY TO AMERICA

A LESSON ON FAITH DRAWN FROM THE PHILIPPIAN EARTHQUAKE

Special cable to the 'Morning Journal.'

"It would be interesting to know, for instance, in what church in London this sermon was preached. No mention is made of it in the 'faked' introduction of the despatch."

It has hardly seemed worth while to say that in the organization or plan of a sermon, Dr. Talmage is almost entirely wanting. As a rule, there is no order, no progress, no unity, no cumulative effect. There is a series of more or less interesting and striking passages, and the sermon ends. It might have ended before, or it might now go on, with equal fitness, so far as concerns any accomplishment of a purpose in the unfolding of thought. The sermon is a mere loose concatenation of paragraphs. True, the paragraphs — often faulty, no doubt — are seldom without their interest, their value, and their life.

These pages will seem to many to have presented a disparaging, and, perhaps, to some, an excessively disparaging estimate of Dr. Talmage's merit. In the aim of the writer, the estimate has been loyally candid and just. It was not the conception of the present series of such estimates of preachers that they should be either mainly eulogistic or mainly destructive. Equally remote from their design was the idea of their being neutrally nugatory. To be fair, to

be effective, to be useful, is the aim held steadily in view by the critic.

Dr. Talmage himself will not be affected in his preaching by what is here set down about him. His pulpit habits, for better or for worse, are permanently fixed. He will go on to the end in the gait which is nature, or which has become a second nature, to him. The writer of these words would not lay a straw of hindrance in his path, but would rather heartily bid him God-speed. If, however, it should turn out that some preachers of the gospel, not as yet unalterably fixed in their ways, should, on the one hand, be deterred from following the lure of false example seductively set before them in the dazzling success of this popular preacher; and should, on the other hand, be incited to emulate him in those respects in which he is truly deserving of emulation, then the present critic will be glad, and then the leading purpose of his paper will have been fulfilled.

III

RICHARD SALTER STORRS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

As in the case of Mr. Beecher and in that of Dr. Talmage, so in the case of Dr. Storrs, the critic took occasion to hear the preacher once more before making him the subject of criticism. In Dr. Storrs's case, he enjoyed besides the advantage of a personal interview, sought by him with the express object of informing himself more satisfactorily from the preacher's own lips, as to points that might prove pertinent to his purpose of criticism.

In this interview, I ventured to draw out from Dr. Storrs reminiscences respecting the occasion of Mr. Beecher's "Silver Wedding," so called, and his, Dr. Storrs's, own part in it. It was gratifying thus to find that I had made no mistake in my comparative estimate of the success of Dr. Storrs's speech on that occasion; or rather that Dr. Storrs's experience of freedom and of power then enjoyed, corresponded with the opinion that, from the evidence of the speech itself, I had previously formed. The great preacher's face flushed with the pleasure of reminiscence, as he testified, "Yes, I felt that I had my audience from the very word, 'Go'." And after using that expressive, if not stately, monosyllable, he proceeded, with magnanimous frankness, to taste over again in recollection, and to let me see him doing so, the joy of the orator's triumph. The speech which he made on the occasion referred to passed over finally into a strain of thought and of feeling so profoundly, so passionately, religious, that it seemed to me quite suitable to give, as it will be found that I have done, an extract from the conclusion of it, in illustration of Dr. Storrs's pulpit eloquence.

This illustrious man continued for years after the following criticism was published, to preach in the Brooklyn pulpit which he had already then so long adorned. Also, in after years, as president of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, he exhibited qualities of leadership and administration that added a new and different lustre to his fame. Still, nothing that, subsequently to the first publication of the criticism following, he either said or did, would, in the present writer's judgment, properly be admitted to modify the sentence which the criticism pronounces upon him as preacher.

One particular occasion on which the present writer had the prized opportunity to hear Dr. Storrs at his oratoric highest and best, may here appropriately be recalled. It was not an occasion of preaching, but it was an ecclesiastic occasion, and therefore closely germane to the tenor of this criticism. A Council had been called, a Congregationalist Council, to meet what was felt to be a crisis in the history of American Congregationalism. It is unnecessary now to say more of this crisis than that it involved Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, and Mr. Beecher, its pastor. Dr. Storrs himself had taken the leading part in causing the Council to be assembled, and upon him devolved the task of impressing a momentum on the comparatively inert mass of mind and conscience congregated in it — a momentum favorable to the cause which he pleaded. It was at the same time an aweing and an inspiring task. Whatever was august and venerable in the eyes of a loyal and traditional Congregationalist, was nobly represented in that numerous and frequent presence. No audience could have been collected from the whole population of the land that would appeal much more powerfully than did this to the generous oratoric ambition of a man with the personal and ancestral instincts and antecedents of Dr. Storrs. There was apparently sufficient sympathy among

the delegates with his cause to afford a needed sense of support to the orator; but evidently, too, there was not sympathy sufficient either to render exertion on his part unnecessary or to excite in him a disqualifying enthusiasm. He seemed to be just fortunately buoyed and ballasted, both at once, by the occasion.

What the Council needed was to be launched on the sea of debate which it should ride. Dr. Storrs's business was to launch it. He found it hanging in the ways. The great lift and shove that should start it must come from his hands. I mean that the Council appeared at the first to pause in a certain grave suspense of misgiving, as in the presence of unknown issues, that it might perhaps have been wiser to postpone, instead of provoking. To impress the controlling movement upon a moral mass in this ambiguous state of inertia was a work worthy of Hercules. And Hercules performed it. The Council was set in a good energy of mental and moral molecular vibration that lasted throughout the session, by that first great speech of Dr. Storrs. Every stroke of the mighty oratory added its increment of intense and fine agitation.

Dr. Storrs rose, a large figure, tall, with a scholarlike stoop at the shoulders. The physical mass of the man helped the moral weight and force of the orator. It was rather impressive to see the ready but not impatient speaker, after rising to begin, yield to some slight occasions for delay, occuring several times in succession, slowly swinging himself halfway round as he resumed his seat, with a sense, the observer could imagine, of sufficient power in reserve to bide tranquilly his full-come hour.

As he proceeded to speak, the voice impressed the hearer. Rich, sweet, strong, sound, clear, it was a full fit vehicle to bear any weight of thought or passion the owner might have to impose upon it. Next the artistic — or, if not artistic,

then the marvelously felicitous, natural — articulation and enunciation commanded your attention. Scarcely more than one or two final syllables escaped my hearing throughout the near two hours and a half of the speech, and I occupied a seat under the gallery, directly opposite the speaker, to one side of him. A certain tone of culture and finish in it made the mere pronunciation an agreeable entertainment to the fastidious ear. Beyond such mere mechanical traits of the speaking, you observed also a musical rhythm and cadence in the delivery of the long, somewhat Choate-like periods, which, however, while always harmonious, grew a little wearisome perhaps at length, from the monotony of its recurring variety. The elocution, like the rhetoric, of the address was too much on one level — a high level of stateliness and dignity. Sharp contrasts in pitch, in volume, in rate, in emphasis, were wanting in the delivery, as they were first, no doubt, wanting in the conception. The habit in delivery had unquestionably, however, reacted in turn upon the habit of conception, and helped to fix it in that sustained loftiness of mood which seems not quite artistic enough, chiefly in that it impresses you as being too artistic. But violent contrasts may, as well as monotony, become a mere habit with a speaker. Mr. Beecher was probably as much an example of the one tendency as Dr. Storrs was of the other. And, while no art can be so fine as great Nature in her great moods, for my own part, I much prefer conscientious, disciplined art to Nature where Nature's magnificent wantonness has been humored into mere lazy and slovenly habit.

Dr. Storrs's diction was noble and affluent. The choicest words in the vocabulary of his mother tongue trooped willingly in muster to his call. But the truth partly is that common words seemed selecter from his mouth, ennobled by the princely pronunciation with which he uttered them. I distinctly remember an instance. It fell in the speaker's

way to characterize Mr. Beecher's genius. In the course of a eulogistic period he followed a substantive with the two adjectives, "splendid, eminent." These were well-worn words; but somehow, in the delectable pronunciation with which they issued to the ear, they had a rare effect. They stood out clear and brilliant, embossed in high relief upon the vivid medallion which Dr. Storrs, to the delight and admiration of his auditors, struck that moment, with a sudden felicity of perfect finish, in tribute to genius and friendship. What wonder that words came readily to his tongue? No word but might feel glad and proud to be pronounced in such patrician fashion.

Were rhetoric and elocution wielded in absolute subordination to the paramount behoof of moral interests? Absolute subordination? Well, perhaps not. "Absolute" is a strong word; and what perfect thing is there in this world? But that the moral element dominated, and was only not absolute, I should say with emphasis. If it was mere pyrotechnics, and not real lightning, with some thunderbolts, that I witnessed, why, it would not be worth my while to describe it; much less would it deserve the praise of being what not I alone, but many experienced judges, declared it — a piece of eloquence which it was an event in one's life to have heard. The splendid light of imagination which was shed — like sunshine, so large it was and so free — over the discourse seemed afterward, when I read the report of it in print, to have been partly a transient effect — transient, but not illusory, an evanescent sheen, evolved between speaker and hearer, by their mutually enkindling personal presence.

The general criticism to be passed upon the whole address, considered as eloquence in the strict and high sense of that word, is probably this: It excited too much admiration. It would have convinced and persuaded and commanded better had it disposed hearers less to praise it. There was somewhat

more of art in it than the art succeeded in hiding. The speaker's moral earnestness deserved and it received his hearer's homage. But the homage rendered was not quite supreme and absolute. You had a sense of leisure and complaisance left for feeling, whether quite justly or not, that what you did not yield to the speaker in agreeing with him you might make up, at least to his partial satisfaction, by admiring him. And still, as I said, the moral element was present in great strength. It only did not master the fellow elements completely.

I could not help remembering an exchange of letters between the young Mr. Storrs of thirty years or so ago and Rufus Choate, which appears in the published life of the latter. Mr. Storrs read law for a time in Choate's office. Afterward, drawn from the law to the ministry of the Gospel, the nobly aspiring young preacher wrote to his old master for literary and oratorical advice. His subsequent career has consisted well with the spirit then manifested. Dr. Storrs has cultivated eloquence in a sense in which the cultivation of eloquence among us in America has almost become obsolete. Only as the last, the "bright consummate flower" of such cultivation could that speech of his before the Council have been produced. A strictly extemporaneous speech, on the hastening ear it made an impression of finish in form like that which his address before the Evangelical Alliance sustains to the leisurely eye. But the copious diction, the elegant syntax, the ripe mastery of topic and treatment, the fusile heat of the oratoric imagination — these were supplied, as in the masterpieces of forensic or quasi-forensic eloquence they always are, by the congenial habit and pursuit of a lifetime, and, besides, by the conversance of previous days and weeks and months with the particular subject of the argument. In oratory, as in everything else, art is long. Nothing perfect comes to us at once.

RICHARD SALTER STORRS

"The prince of living pulpit rhetoricians," would be a true, but it would be a very inadequate, and it might prove a very misleading, characterization of the subject of the present paper. Dr. Storrs is easily that, but he is alike more, and other, and better, than that. He rises upon occasion from the rhetorician to the orator; and even when he is least the orator and most the rhetorician, he is always so sterling in thought, and so lofty in moral or religious purpose, that to think of him as only, or as chiefly, a rhetorician, would be to make a capital, a vital, mistake in critical appreciation of his quality. He is a great sincere and serious soul, in whom — by a mere chance perhaps of early determining choice on his own part — the genius of the orator was destined to be somewhat overborne by the culture of the rhetorician. It is bold pure conjecture to hazard, but I can easily conceive how, if the youthful Storrs, who was a student-at-law of Rufus Choate, had taken his life-long bent in style of thought and expression from a Dorian master like Webster, instead of a Corinthian master like Choate, he might have issued a quite different speaker from that stately, that magnificent, pulpit orator who is our national joy and pride in the actual Dr. Storrs of to-day, bearing so strongly and so lightly the burden of his well-nigh seventy useful and honorable years.

Do you say, "But warmth of temperament was wanting to this otherwise prodigally gifted nature, and that deficiency was from the first in itself enough to have made him, and hopelessly to keep him, the style of orator that he is, capable indeed of shining like the sun, but incapable of warming as the sun warms?"

A natural judgment, but probably a fallacious. A mask of oratoric manner, early put on and twenty years unceas-

ingly worn by a public speaker, acquires almost unlimited power to hide in that speaker a fundamental reality of natural endowment; nay, to work, by reflex reaction of influence, or well-nigh, for the uses of public speaking, to work, an utter extinction, as it were, of some inherent personal trait in the man. I have misinterpreted a certain signal public utterance of this great orator, if, on one occasion at least, breaking through the exterior crust of calm which Dr. Storrs before an audience usually exhibits to observers, there did not appear an escape of noble elemental passion in speech, betokening within the central core of his being the presence of power, originally his, to have become a shaker of assemblies like Demosthenes himself, or, to use a fitter comparison, like Chrysostom preaching in the basilicas of Antioch and Constantinople.

Such, however, is not in fact the character in which Dr. Storrs is familiar to the public, and in which he will be known in the history of later pulpit eloquence. We properly deal here with what he is, rather than with what he might have been; and still what he might have been is, in its measure, necessary to be considered, in order to estimating accurately and adequately what he is.

Dr. Storrs, if you count by generations, stands fourth in a long and splendid line of hereditary ministerial succession. His father, his grandfather, his great-grandfather, were ancestors to him in office as well as in blood. Something of an hereditary cast of character, ennobled perhaps with each successive transmission, has, so it is easy to imagine, descended along the whole line from sire to son. It does not seem to be the separate single individual alone who looks upon you from Dr. Storrs's pulpit with that commanding mien, and who speaks to you thence in those commanding tones. Your imagination beholds also the invisible faces, your imagination hearkens also to the inaudible voices, of an illustrious dead ancestry standing with solemn and impressive port behind the living speaker. You somehow feel besides that the speaker himself is not unconscious of such

influence, sympathetic and collaborant with him, derived from his own ancestral past.

It is very easy, very delightful, and, in the present case, to the present writer, almost irresistibly instinctive, to dwell thus in imagining and admiring. I must not, however, be beguiled to forget that my business now is neither to imagine nor to admire, but to criticise. Happily, to criticise is to judge, and not merely to find fault. To praise, certainly not less than to blame, is the critic's true office. Blaming where blameworthiness is found, praising where praiseworthiness, and balancing the two against each other in the nice equipoise of justice and truth,— that, in short, is the genuine critic's oft-misapprehended duty and delight. But I have not completely stated the business of criticism until I have gone farther and said that there is to be adjoined the still more delicate and difficult task of merely distinguishing, and designating with accuracy, qualities and quantities — through all the varying shades and degrees in which they may exist in a subject criticised — without impertinently bestowing either praise or blame for individual differences, in a particular case properly demanding neither the one nor the other. Let us now — I venture to associate my readers — in the case before us, at once address ourselves to our task thus defined.

Whether one listen with one's ears to the living speaker, or listen with one's eyes to the speaker's words in print, in either case equally, I think, the first and strongest impression taken of Dr. Storrs is a moral impression, the impression of high personal character in the man. This perhaps has already been implied; but it needs thus to be said expressly, and said with the emphasis of reiteration. And to say it does not travel a step outside the strict and proper purview of the critic of eloquence. For, since Aristotle, it has been a commonplace of rhetorical teaching that to be a good orator you must, most important of all, be a good man. This condition in Dr. Storrs's case his hearer feels to be completely fulfilled.

We have here to distinguish a little. A certain great preacher, and one who is at the same time a great teacher of preaching — a man of whom a criticism is attempted in this volume, Dr. Broadus — lays it down as a prime maxim for the pulpit, Secure the sympathy of your audience. By sympathy, Dr. Broadus of course does not mean compassionate regard. On the other hand, however, it is something more than good will that he means. He means good will touched and vivified with lively emotion. Dr. Broadus, by the way, as orator, exemplifies his own maxim, by himself exciting this sentiment to a remarkable degree in his audience.

It is not exactly such an effect as this of conciliation and ingratiation that Dr. Storrs produces, by the impression which he makes of personal character on the sense of one hearing him or reading him. He does not enlist your sympathy, so much as he compels your respect. You are commanded rather than won.

Evidently, for the purposes of the popular orator, it would be an advantage to Dr. Storrs to be persuasive as much as convincing. But it is, on the other hand, to be remembered that the Christian preacher is not simply a popular orator speaking from the pulpit. The Christian preacher is likewise a pastor, a citizen, and a man. Besides this also, for the case of a minister like Dr. Storrs, it must be considered that in any very large city, the preacher, out of a population there sufficiently numerous to allow it, comes in the end to select his own audience. This process of selection on the part of preacher and preacher was always of course active in Brooklyn. Emotional people Mr. Beecher naturally drew to himself far more than could be the case with Dr. Storrs. Mr. Beecher engaged their sympathy more. Dr. Storrs, however, has never lacked a following less impressionable, indeed, yet in their way not less responsive to his own peculiar personal influence than were Mr. Beecher's adherents to his. There always are persons who do not desire to have their emotional susceptibilities played upon, who

like better to be addressed in their reason than in their passion. Such persons are naturally elected to be of the congregation of a preacher and pastor like Dr. Storrs. A congregation so composed may make up in solidity, stability, weight, what it lacks in impulse, mobility, *verve*. Dr. Storrs's work has been other, but perhaps it has not been less, than it would have been had he possessed the broadly and obviously sympathetic qualities which in fact he lacks. He would in that case have attracted a different congregation, larger perhaps, but one which in counting more might have weighed less. At any rate, the personal character which you feel as a force in Dr. Storrs the orator works for him with you rather by commanding your confidence than by enlisting your sympathy.

Apart from such direct effect of personal character felt by his hearers, and additional to it, there is to be reckoned also a sense awakened on the hearers' part that the speaker himself has a constant conscientious feeling of his own personal character and of what is due to it from himself at least if not from them. The trait I now mean is far enough from vanity and it is equally removed from pride. It is sober, mindful, serious sense of personality and worth; in one word, it is true dignity. "This man"— such is your instinctive, though it may be unformulated impression — "this man will reason with me, will teach me, will warn me, will remonstrate, will invite, will threaten; but one thing there is he never will do, he will never play me a trick, never cheat, never cajole. If he were not otherwise above such conduct, he has too much lofty dignity for it, he respects himself too much." Dr. Storrs could never have been a demagog, he could never have been an actor, he could never have been the pliant favorite orator of the populace. He will not condescend enough.

This conscious dignity of which I speak would be in Dr. Storrs's way, if he were to resolve on mixing histrionism with oratory, and on seeking to succeed in the pulpit, as the play-actor succeeds on the stage, by pleasing his audience

with various mimicry, instead of purifying them with reason and with terror. But of course this conscious dignity in him would also prevent his ever forming such a resolution. In short, Dr. Storrs is, by a certain moral superiority in him, incapable of being an orator to wheedle popular moods, and to seem to rule, by really indulging, his hearers. He recalls the noble words spoken by that frugal encomiast, Thucydides, of the great Athenian Pericles.

"He [Pericles], deriving authority from his capacity and acknowledged worth, being also a man of transparent integrity, was able to control the multitude in a free spirit; he led them rather than was led by them; for, not seeking power by dishonest arts, he had no need to say pleasant things, but on the strength of his own high character could venture to oppose and even to anger them. When he saw them unseasonably elated and arrogant, his words humbled and awed them. . . . Thus Athens, though still in name a democracy, was in fact ruled by her greatest citizen."

It is in an attitude of moral superiority somewhat such as is thus attributed by Thucydides to Pericles, that Dr. Storrs presents himself to his audience. His is emphatically an eloquence of character and of dignity.

In considering what characteristic of Dr. Storrs's oratory next to name as next in order of importance, I pause in almost hopeless balance between two quite different, and even as it were contradictory, things, the one moral, and the other mental, the one an original endowment, and the other an adventitious acquisition; in a word, I hardly know whether to say moral earnestness or elegant culture. The impression of moral earnestness must be very strongly made on you by Dr. Storrs to assert itself at all, much more to assert itself in doubtful rivalry, against an elegant culture in him impressing you with such unparalleled power. For Dr. Storrs seems to me to be in this respect without peer anywhere in the world among the preachers of his time. By elegant culture I mean not exact scholarship, not multi-

farious learning, not wide information, but a certain grace and finish of mind, the "bright consummate flower" of arduous self-discipline conducted by one possessing beforehand that inborn fitness for it which is the incommunicable gift of taste or of genius.

The circumstance that elegant culture strikes one so strongly as a trait in the oratory of Dr. Storrs, may be largely due to the fact that he makes his general public impression through occasional sermons and addresses rather than by the ordinary average strain of his preaching of the gospel. He has never published a volume of parochial sermons; while as orator for occasions of an elevated character he is perhaps as near as any living American to being now the elect favorite voice of the nation. It is natural and proper that in occasional eloquence — epideictic the Greeks who originated it called this kind of public speaking — there should be used a style more studied and ornate than would be fit in ordinary pulpit discourse. But under all the ornament with which Dr. Storrs loves, on a select signal occasion, to decorate his speech, there never fails to beat a heart of genuine moral earnestness. I cannot doubt that in his habitual pastoral preaching, moral earnestness exercises its unquestioned right to be unmistakable lord paramount of his discourse.

The truly magnificent oration delivered by Dr. Storrs in 1880 before the Phi Beta Kappa Society in Harvard University is perhaps the single specimen among such utterances of this orator, best deserving to be styled his masterpiece in epideictic eloquence. Here the epideictic character almost disappears, consumed in the noble intensity of moral earnestness that burns throughout the discourse. But no stress of moral earnestness, kindled to whatever sevenfold heat, could prevail to consume the decoration, proof as of diamond, which Dr. Storrs's taste and culture have united with his labor of art to lavish upon this production.

Take the following sentence. The orator is drawing argument for the supernatural, as a force in letters and in

life, from the introduction by Homer into his poems of interferences from the gods in human affairs. Dr. Storrs says — how full of the scholar's enthusiastic reminiscence, how full of the rhetorician's power with words, is his language!—:

"The wine-colored waters breaking around the high-beaked ships, the camp-fires glittering on the plain, the splendor of armor shining in the air as with the flash of mountain-fires, the troubled dust rising in mist before the tramp of rapid feet, greaves with their silver clasps, helmets crested with horse-hair plumes, the marvelous shield, with triple border, blazoned with manifold intricate device, and circled by the ocean stream, the changeful and impetuous fight, the anguish and rage, and the illustrious funeral-pile — not by these, though moving before us in epic verse, and touched with iridescent lights by the magic of genius, is the mind held captive to the Iliad, as by its shadowy morning-time spirit of 'surmise and aspiration'; by the tender and daring divine illusions, which see the air quick with veiled Powers, and the responding earth the haunted field of their Olympian struggle and debate"

How a sentence like that seems to illumine its page as with shifting sheen of color and of light! The very senses are, through the imagination, delighted with it — to such a degree delighted that the mind almost forgets to consider whether the orator's main thought here is strong enough to bear the weight of decoration with which the rhetorician's art and the scholar's wealth of Homeric recollection together have freighted it. The merely natural charm of Homer has first been, at such length, so richly and so sympathetically described, that the supernatural charm afterward more briefly attributed is hardly felt to be greater — as, however, for the orator's purpose, it had need to be. The rhetoric well-nigh gets the better of the oratory.

The chaste brilliance of the passage just shown does not over-represent the pure rhetorical splendor of the discourse as a whole. The eyes fairly ache with enjoying and admiring. And Dr. Storrs's style of delivery well corresponds — lofty, grave, continuously majestic. The speaking takes up

the effect of the writing and carries it to its height. There could scarcely be a better rhetorical example than that supplied in the foregoing passage, to set off by contrast the meretricious quality of style exhibited in the extract, of preceding pages, from Dr. Talmage's discourse descriptive of the Grand Canon in Yellowstone Park.

If we resolutely release ourselves from the fascination laid upon us by the oratory, to study at leisure the secret of its method, the first thing perhaps to strike us is the diction of the discourse. This is choice, copious, varied, but it is especially rich in adjectives, and adjectives of a certain class — a class attributing loftiness, largeness, splendor, opulence. The frequency and recurrence of such adjectives is remarkable. The sense is sated with them. Save that they are so select and so apt, and so picturesque, in Dr. Storrs's use, there would at length be felt something like the fullness of satiety. And the English language is not rich enough to supply so many of this class of adjectives as not to leave the orator obliged to repeat noticeably certain favorite ones, among them, "imperial," "supreme," "majestic," "supernal," "radiant," "transcendent," "superlative," "sovereign," "august," "stately," "lucid," "luminous," "iridescent"— these adjectives, and adjectives like these, stud Dr. Storrs's ample pages as stars and constellations and galaxies stud the firmament of heaven. A trace of the authentic effect of the magnificent discourse itself, seems produced by a mere miscellaneous assemblage like the foregoing, as in a procession, of its buskined and togated adjectives.

And apart from the adjectives, the diction in general partakes with these of the character which I have now sought to describe. The substantives are worthy of the adjectives that attend them, while the verbs set the substantives in action always in a manner comportable with the dignity which they must not disparage. The keeping is perfect. The state and equipage are throughout unimpeachably maintained.

And yet to what general statement is there no exception

that candor must note? Occasionally a discord jars the majestic harmony of Dr. Storrs's diction. Here is an example, not a very striking one, but apposite, for it occurs even in that same academic discourse which I reckon the glory and crown of Dr. Storrs's occasional eloquence:

"No mechanical philosophy has had secular supremacy; and that form of speculation which reduces the personal spirit in man to physical terms, making thought itself, volition, passion, the result of simple molecular action, and binding the race in a sterner fatalism than any theologian ever imagined — it has *spurted* into sight in different communities, but it nowhere has reached abiding power."

The plebeian sound and the ignoble association of the word "spurted" do, one admits, go far toward justifying its introduction here, as an expedient of righteously degrading that materialistic spirit which it is the orator's present business to condemn. In truth I do not blame, I only note, this trait of diction. Perhaps indeed I ought to praise it; but at any rate it is a jar in the harmony of the elevated language in which it occurs. It serves thus by contrast to make one more keenly aware how sustained and even a high tenor of choice in words has prevailed. The adjective "secular," in the sentence quoted above, is of course employed in its classic sense of "age-long." It is a Latinism not uncharacteristic of the taste and habit of the orator.

Another thing noticeable, still in the line of diction, is Dr. Storrs's manneristic pluralizing of certain substantives generally used only in the singular. "Freedoms," "knowledges," "welfares," "enthusiasms," "generosities," "defiances," "wealths," are examples. This peculiarity sometimes has a genuine effect of heightening the value of meaning expressed, and where such effect is illusory the illusion is yet not without its charm to the imagination.

Dr. Storrs still further enriches and individualizes his diction by bringing into use upon occasion a word (or a form

of word, as "heroical"), that his reader will seldom or never have met in any other writer. For instance:

"It is not only that in ecstasy or in agony it [the human spirit] transcends situations, finds no complete image of its intense life in anything physical, and in its bright or awful solitude is conscious only of timeless relations, and of being *affined* to imperial spirits."

My readers must instinctively have noted the lofty monotony, of diction not only, but of phrase and structure of period, that recurs in every quotation here introduced. Such is the stately Virgilian character of rhetoric everywhere prevailing in Dr. Storrs's elaborate discourse. There never pauses the processional pomp of numerous rhythmic prose. Or, to use now a different figure, it is like one prolonged orchestral harmony sustained throughout by imperial organ tones.

I have thus far sought to characterize, rather than to imply judgment for or against. If now it were made my duty to judge, I think I should be obliged to say that in my own opinion Dr. Storrs commits the rhetorical fault of splendid excess. He always has a meaning; but he sometimes makes his meaning dark with splendor. His words dazzle us till we fail to see the thought itself which they over-illumine. This is at times true both of the particular sentence and of the whole discourse. Even his topic Dr. Storrs does not always state in a manner sufficiently direct and unadorned to fulfil Quintilian's requirement that you should say things not only so clearly that men can understand them, but so clearly that men cannot help understanding them. For example, in the Phi Beta Kappa oration already quoted from, the speaker, having used nine brilliant pages to introduce his topic, glides then so imperceptibly into his statement of his topic, that you, supposed a hearer, are hardly aware how important a thing is in progress until all is over; then you strive, perhaps not with entire success, to recall exactly what has been said. The manner in which the statement of topic referred to appears on the printed

page may fairly be taken to represent the effect that would be produced by that statement as heard by an audience. The statement stands, typographically undistinguished, in the midst of a paragraph, as follows:

"I would offer, with your permission, a brief plea for the fresh and controlling recognition among us of what is essentially Supernatural: which can not be the object of present demonstration, yet whose reality is suggested by many facts, and the glory of which man may in a measure prophetically feel, though only its vague outlines can he see."

The foregoing is, as I think, an oratorically ineffective statement of topic. It is not simple, not straightforward, not brief and unencumbered enough. And, besides this, it is too unannounced and informal. It produces the effect of being itself a part of the discourse rather than of announcing the subject of the discourse.

A like oratorical error seems to me to be committed in the orator's not setting forth the order of treatment which he intends to pursue. All is left vague and undefined. The discourse moves, it moves strongly, majestically, magnificently, but it moves along no highway perceived, and toward no goal foreshown. There is movement, in short, without progress, or at least without progress that the hearer or reader is able distinctly to feel and enjoy. It is more like the movement of an army on parade than it is like the movement of an army on the march, much more than like the movement of an army rushing to battle.

There is one printed discourse of Dr. Storrs's which presents a noteworthy exception to his habitual excessive neglect of analysis, neglect, I mean, of obvious, of confessed and formal, analysis. This is the discourse delivered by him in 1873 before the Evangelical Alliance on "The Appeal of Romanism to Educated Protestants." In that discourse Dr. Storrs is exemplarily clear both in stating his subject and object, and afterward in marking the successive stages accomplished of progress toward his goal. The method of

the orator is there, in nearly every respect, completely satisfactory.

I think it not unlikely, however, that the distinguished orator himself, if consulted, might say, "The discourse you thus praise is in my own view less an oration than an essay. It was a paper read rather than an address delivered. The analysis you like was fit to its character as an essay, but it would not have been fit to its character if it had been a proper oration." In other words, I must not doubt that so experienced and considerate an orator as Dr. Storrs proceeds in this matter according to a method which his own mature and deliberate judgment recommends. He conceals, as in general he does conceal, his plan of discourse, because he thinks that so to conceal it is wisest and best. I can only, with modesty, but without diffidence, record my own opinion that this method is for any public speaker a serious oratorical mistake. It immensely diminishes the present effectiveness of a given discourse with the hearer, and it powerfully reacts to make the orator himself less clear in thought, less intent on progress in argument, and less urgent in aim.

Of all the printed discourses that I have seen from Dr. Storrs, the discourse last named, "The Appeal of Romanism to Educated Protestants," is probably the one best adapted to afford pleasure and profit to the average man. It is sufficiently splendid in rhetoric, and it gives the reader what, as I have implied, he often misses in Dr. Storrs's discourse, a satisfying sense of progress continually made from point to point as he reads.

In some of the critical papers belonging to this series, the writer finds occasion to point out defects of literary conscience and care on the part of the preachers treated, especially defects of this sort appearing in the form of loose, inaccurate quotation. Little, almost nothing, of such fault can be brought home to Dr. Storrs. He everywhere displays a fine literary instinct and conscience. Conscience I judge it must be, as well as mere instinct; but Dr. Storrs's

phenomenal memory might perhaps almost be trusted, in conjunction with his instinct, to guard him against faults of literary negligence, even if he felt within himself no pricks of literary conscience to be careful. It is well known what feats of memory in matters of fact involving dates, and numbers, and names of men and places not generally familiar, Dr. Storrs has achieved, pronouncing without notes discourses on historical subjects singly occupying hours of time.

This form of memory is not, however, the secret of Dr. Storrs's success in extemporary speaking. Real extemporary speaking it is that he does, not speaking from memory. He neither writes his sermons, nor composes them without writing as was to some extent the practice of Robert Hall. He premeditates them, of course. That is to say, it is not extemporary thinking that he gives his hearers; and much less is it extemporary speaking without thought. It is prepared thought taking body at the moment, as of its own accord, in unprepared expression. Naturally, inevitably, in the course of previously preparing his thought, the thinker will have called up to his mind many words fit to the expression of the thought. Such words will instinctively recur to him in the act of oral delivery. But there will have been little or no framing of sentences. The sentences will frame themselves as the sermon proceeds. With Dr. Storrs, however, the sentences will not frame themselves in that absolutely simple, spontaneous, and therefore endlessly varying order, the order of nature, which was the beautiful marvel of Mr. Beecher's unparalleled eloquence. The mold of period in which Dr. Storrs habitually casts his expression is much more that of written, than it is that of spoken, discourse. He trained himself to write; and when he speaks now without having written, it is in the rhetorical style of composition, proper for instance for one dictating elaborate discourse for committal to writing. The product is wonderfully fine, considered as mere composition turned off at so rapid a rate.

Still it is necessarily far from being finished and polished up to the standard of his confessedly written discourse.

Let not the young preacher believe or admire unwisely. No merely human speaker ever yet spoke on this planet, whose extemporary utterance taken down without change absolutely as it fell from his lips would read grammatically, rhetorically, and logically clear of fault — judged, I mean, by the relative standard of that same speaker's own written production. The extemporary utterance may be far better, considered as oratory, than the carefully written; but that result, if it exist, will be due to the presence in the extemporary utterance of certain virtues not belonging to the written; it will by no means be due to the absence from the extemporary, of faults such as perhaps the written utterance would altogether avoid.

Dr. Storrs, then, as extemporary speaker, presents an example of what long careful practice with the pen will enable a gifted man to do in producing, if the paradox will be pardoned, *written* discourse rapidly with the *tongue* — this, rather than an example of successful offhand pulpit oratory strictly and properly so called. To become a master in this latter kind, the only way is to form your style through speaking rather than through writing. Write as much as you please, the more the better, if you write with care. But see to it that you learn to write as you speak, instead of learning to speak as you write.

At the outset of this paper I expressed the opinion that Dr. Storrs had it in him by nature to become an orator of a very different type from the calm, dignified, self-contained, unimpassioned speaker that, as a matter of fact, he prevailingly is. I then also, without naming it, alluded to a particular occasion of his eloquence which I thought demonstrated this. That occasion was the "Silver Wedding," so styled, in which the twenty-fifth anniversary was celebrated of Mr. Beecher's commencing as pastor of Plymouth Church. One session of that prolonged festival of commemoration was chiefly given up to an address by Dr. Storrs.

Dr. Storrs was in the prime of his age and in the fullness of manly health refreshed from an interval just previously enjoyed of rest and foreign travel. The occasion was animating, the subject, "Mr. Beecher as a Preacher," was a personal one that touched and vivified the speaker, the reciprocity between speaker and hearers was perfect, was electric, and in short all conditions conspired to put Dr. Storrs at his very best in a vein of truly natural eloquence. The result was an address which, for spontaneous felicity, beauty, humor, pathos, power, Mr. Beecher himself in his happiest inspirations rarely surpassed. I wish every reader of this criticism could read that address in full. It is now hardly accessible, I suppose. It was preserved in a pamphlet record of the entire occasion, published at the time; but that record has long been a rare publication difficult to find. I give here an extract or two. Does not the following passage exhibit Dr. Storrs in the light of a speaker capable of doing almost anything he might please to attempt in the way of ready, effective, popular handling of a subject? The contrast will be immediately felt between the studied and stately rhetoric exemplified in preceding citations, and the free, easy, masterful style exemplified now. Dr. Storrs is engaged in analyzing the secret of Mr. Beecher's power. He says:

"I think I should put second [among Mr. Beecher's endowments] immense common sense; a wonderfully self-rectifying judgment which gives sobriety and soundness to all his main processes of thought. I don't know but I have been more impressed by that in Mr. Beecher than by any other one element of strength in him. I have seen him go to the edge of a proposition which seemed to me dangerous and almost absurd, again and again, but he never went over. He always caught himself on the edge, not by any special volition, but by an instinctive impulse; by the law of a nature that rectifies mistakes almost before they are made. If he has taken an extravagant view which seems about to diverge from the solid ground, it never fairly and finally does so. He reminds me of sensations which I have had a hundred times in crossing the ocean. For

instance, coming back from Europe in the Russia during a heavy blow, we were taking the waves 'quartering.' Down would go the starboard side, and up would go the larboard; down would go the stern, and up would go the bows; then the great ship would ride for an instant balanced upon the top of the wave; then, as she reeled over, the bows would go down and the stern would go up; the larboard side would go down and the starboard up; but the grand old ship would always swing herself to a level in the valleys between those ridges of water. She was perpetually diving or climbing, but balancing herself between, she would always swing to her level again. And whatever she did, she was forever going on toward the distant harbor. As one sea-sick fellow-passenger of mine said, 'Confound it, making that gigantic figure 8 all the time!' But that gigantic figure 8 was what was driving us on, through storm or shine, toward Sandy Hook."

This passage, let it be observed, is itself like what it so well describes in the sea voyage, and, through that, in Mr. Beecher, a "figure 8," not "gigantic," indeed, but for its purpose amply large enough, and everywhere alive with movement and progress. Such felicity and fitness in description are not the product of forethought and labor; they are the inspiration of genius.

Of course no such necessarily brief extract as it would be suitable here to introduce could do anything more than merely hint, even to the very wise and thoughtful reader, what capacity of versatile adjustment to the needs of various expression the whole noble and beautiful address exhibits as held in possession by the orator. The life, the movement, the progress, the power, you must read the address throughout in order adequately to feel. I give one more passage — that in which the speaker modulates humor, analysis, anecdote, reminiscence, all, to the lofty, pathetic *magnificat* of his close — "pathetic," I feel it to have been, in view of what was so soon after to be!"

"We have stood side by side in all these years; and they have been wonderful and eventful years.

'Our eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,
When he loosed the fateful lightnings of his terrible swift sword,
And his truth went marching on!'

"We have differed many times, but two men so unlike never stood side by side with each other, for so long a time, in more perfect harmony; without a jealousy or a jar! Tho we have differed in opinion, we have never differed in feeling. We have walked to the graves of friends in company. We have sat at the table of the Lord in company. He knows, as he has said, that when other voices were loud and fierce in hostility to him, mine never joined them. When other pens wrote his name, dropping gall and venom as they wrote it, my pen never touched the paper except in honor and admiration of him. And I know that whenever I have wanted counsel or courage, given me from others, he has always been ready, from the overflowing surplus of his surcharged mind, to give them to me.

"So we have stood side by side — blessed be God! — in no spirit but of fraternal love, for that long space of twenty-five years, which began with the Right Hand of Fellowship then, and closes before you here to-night.

"I am not here, my friends, to repeat the service which then I performed. It would be superfluous. When I think of the great assemblies that have surged and thronged around this platform; when I think of the influences that have gone out from this pulpit into all the earth — I feel that less than almost any other man on earth does he need the assurance of fellowship from any but the Son of God! But I am here to-night for another and a different service! On behalf of you who tarry, and of those who have ascended from this congregation; on behalf of Christians of every name throughout our city, who have had such joy and pride in him, and the name of whose town has, by him, been made famous in the earth; on behalf of all our churches now growing to be an army; on behalf of those in every part of our land who have never seen his face or heard his voice, but who have read and loved his sermons, and been quickened and blessed by them; on behalf of the great multitudes who have gone up from every land which his sermons have reached — never having touched his hand on earth, but waiting to greet him by and by; I am here to-night [taking Mr. Beecher

by the hand] to give him the Right Hand of Congratulation, on the closing of this twenty-fifth year of his ministry; and to say: God be praised for all the work that you have done here! God be praised for the generous gifts which he has showered upon you, and the generous use which you have made of them, here and elsewhere, and everywhere in the land! God give you many happy and glorious years of work and joy still to come in your ministry on earth! May your soul, as the years go on, be whitened more and more, in the radiance of God's light, and in the sunshine of his love! And, when the end comes — as it will — may the gates of pearl swing inward for your entrance, before the hands of those who have gone up before you, and who now wait to welcome you thither! and then may there open to you that vast and bright eternity — all vivid with God's love — in which an instant vision shall be perfect joy, and an immortal labor shall be to you immortal rest."

"This magnificent concluding passage," said the Brooklyn "Union" of the next day,

"was uttered with an eloquence that defies description. At its conclusion Mr. Beecher, with tears, and trembling from head to foot, arose, and placing his hand on Dr. Storrs's shoulder, kissed him upon the cheek. The congregation sat for a moment breathless and enraptured with this simple and beautiful action. Then there broke from them such a burst of applause as never before was heard in an ecclesiastical edifice. There was not a dry eye in the house."

I could not refrain from subjoining an immediate journalistic testimony to the overpowering effect which this address, with its close, produced as delivered. Much doubtless was in the occasion itself, and in the moving spectacular response which the eloquent sincerity of Dr. Storrs evoked from Mr. Beecher; but what inextinguishable quintessence of oratoric power survives even in the printed words! For my own part, I am willing to confess that I can scarcely now read the passage over, for perhaps the twentieth time, without tears.

It is painful, but it seems necessary, to recall that within a few months of the time when Dr. Storrs poured out his heart to Mr. Beecher in the manner just shown, that darkness as of eclipse passed suddenly over the face of Mr. Beecher's fair fame, then still riding high like the sun at midnoon in its zenith of glory. The long disastrous twilight that succeeded the daytime of splendor!

Through no fault, as I believe, of Dr. Storrs, and for no reason personal to himself, the fellowship which he had but now so magnanimously celebrated was broken for life. He never, I think, unsaid those generous words, but also he never, alas, could say them again. "May your soul, as you go on, be whitened more and more"—the wish and the prayer half seems now in the retrospect to have had in it already something of the sadness of unconscious prophetic foreboding. Words refuse to utter the burden of the pathos, the tragedy. Let us think of it, not speak of it.

But of Dr. Storrs himself, and of his work, we may freely both think and speak with unmingled grateful joy. His work is not done; it yet, we may hope, awaits a long glorious consummation. That work, when finished, we need not doubt, will abide; and then always, still greater, still better, than his work, to make his work stronger, more beautiful, will abide, unflawed, the character of the man that achieved it.

IV

PHILLIPS BROOKS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

As has already been in part intimated, soon after the original "Homiletic Review" series of criticisms was completed, the publishers of that monthly, at the instance of the author (who from the first had in view a subsequent collective edition in book form of his papers), wrote to the subjects of them then still living, accompanying their communication with a copy of the particular number, or numbers, of the magazine called for in each case, to ask that they would kindly point out any error in statement as to fact into which the author might have been betrayed. From no one of them — unless the case, already noted, of Dr. Talmage, should be held to constitute an exception — was answer received pointing out any such error. Bishop Brooks, however, then plain Mr. Brooks, very characteristically wrote in gentle deprecation of being made the subject of critical treatment so serious, apparently not thinking it likely to be of real use. Perhaps he thus expressed himself from the same manly modesty that made the great man blush, when once, years before, the present writer addressed him by a title of distinction which he felt obliged to disclaim. I had been introduced to him by the venerated Dr. A. P. Peabody in Appleton Chapel at Harvard, immediately after hearing him preach there. With unconscious, certainly with unintentional, anticipation of what was indeed to be, but of what was not yet, I addressed the eloquent preacher as "Dr. Brooks." "I am not doctor," he said, with a prompt flush of color mantling his cheek. The instinctive impulse of genuineness in him would not let him for one moment, even

to a stranger, appear — and that in the presence of one who knew the true state of the case — willing to seem what he was not.

It may help "place" Phillips Brooks as he ought to be placed, in the mind of the reader of the following criticism, if I reproduce here an account which I wrote at the time, of a Sunday spent in hearing this great preacher preach from his own pulpit in Trinity Church, Boston. It was a day of added preparation for properly presenting him to the public in a critical paper. (Long habit, together with perhaps a certain native aptitude of mind, had created in me, I believe, some ability to observe critically, that is, judgingly, without losing the personal profit to be gained from what was observed.) I entitled my little account, "Phillips Brooks at Home":

"Phillips Brooks at home," of course, means Phillips Brooks in Trinity Church, Boston. Other than his church, home proper he has none, for he abides a bachelor.

And somehow it seems almost fit that a man like Mr. Brooks, a man so ample, so overflowing; a man, as it were, more than sufficient to himself, sufficient also to a multitude of others, should have his home large and public; such a home, in short, as Trinity Church. Here Phillips Brooks shines like a sun — diffusing warmth and light and life. What a blessing to what a number! To what a number of souls, it would have been natural to say; but, almost as natural, to what a number of bodies! For the physical man is a source of comfort, in its kind, hardly less so than the intellectual and the spiritual. How that massive, majestic manhood makes weather where it is, and what weather! Broad, equable, temperate, calm; yet tonic withal, and inspiring. You rejoice in it. You have an irrational feeling that it would be a wrong to shut up so much opulence of per-

sonal vitality in any home less wide and open than a great basilica like Trinity Church. At least, you are not pained with sympathy for homelessness in the case of a man so richly endowed. To be so pained would be like shivering on behalf of the sun because, forsooth, the sun had nothing to make him warm and bright. Phillips Brooks in Trinity Church is like the sun in its sphere. Still, and were it not impertinent, I could even wish for Phillips Brooks an every-day home, such as would be worthy of him. What a home it should be! And, with thus much of loyal, if of doubtfully appropriate, tribute, irresistibly prompted, and therefore not to be repressed, let me go on to speak of Phillips Brooks as he is to be seen and heard Sunday after Sunday at home in Trinity Church.

Everybody knows how magnificent an edifice, with its arrested tower yet waiting and probably long to wait completion, Trinity Church is. The interior is decorated almost to the point of gorgeousness. The effect, however, is imposing, for "the height, the gloom, the glory." Good taste reigning over lavish expenditure has prevented chromatic richness from seeming to approach tawdriness.

It is much to say for any man preaching here that the building does not make him look disproportionate, inadequate. This may strongly be said for Phillips Brooks. But even for him it cannot be said that the form and construction of the interior do not oppose a serious embarrassment to the proper effect of oratory. I could not help feeling it to be a great wrong to the truth, or, to put it personally, a great wrong to the preacher and to his hearers, that an audience-room should be so broken up with pillars, angles, recesses, so sown with contrasts of light and shade, as necessarily, inevitably, to disperse and waste an immense fraction of the power exerted by the speaker, whatever the measure, great or small, of that power might be. The reaction of this audience-room

upon the oratorical instinct and habit of the man who should customarily speak in it, could not but be disadvantageous in a very high degree, the sense, which ought to live in every public speaker, of his being fast bound in a grapple of mind to mind, and heart to heart, and soul to soul, with his audience, must be oppressed, if not extinguished, amid such architectural conditions as those which surround Phillips Brooks where he stands to preach. That in him this needful sense is not extinguished, is a thing to be thankful for. That it is in fact oppressed, I cannot doubt. There is evidence of it, I think, in his manner of preaching.

For Mr. Brooks is not an orator such as Mr. Beecher was. He does not speak *to* people, *into* people, as Mr. Beecher did; rather he speaks *before* them, in their presence. He soliloquizes. There is almost a minimum of mutual relation between speaker and hearer. Undoubtedly the swift, urgent monolog is quickened, reinforced, by the consciousness of an audience present. That consciousness, of course, penetrates to the mind of the speaker. But it does not dominate the speaker's mind; it does not turn monolog into dialog; the speech is monolog still.

This is not invariably the case; for, occasionally, the preacher turns his noble face toward you, and for that instant you feel the aim of his discourse leveled full at your personality. Now there is a glimpse of true oratorical power. But the glimpse passes quickly. The countenance is again directed forward toward the horizon, or even lifted toward a quarter of the sky above the horizon, and the but momentarily interrupted rapt soliloquy proceeds.

Such I understand to have been the style of Robert Hall's pulpit speech. It is a rare gift to be a speaker of this sort. The speaker must be a thinker as well as a speaker. The speech is, in truth, a process of thinking aloud — thinking accelerated, exhilarated, by the vocal exercise accompanying,

and then, too, by the blindfold sense of a listening audience near. This is the preaching of Mr. Brooks.

It is, perhaps, not generally known that Mr. Brooks practices two distinct methods of preaching: one, that with the manuscript; the other, that without. The last time that I had the chance of a Sunday in Trinity Church was Luther's day, the tercentenary of his death. The morning discourse was a luminous and generous appreciation of the great Reformer's character and work. This was read, in that rapid, vehement, incessant manner which description has made sufficiently familiar to the public. The precipitation of utterance is like the flowing forth of the liquid contents of a bottle suddenly inverted; every word seems hurrying to be foremost. The unaccustomed hearer is at first left hopelessly in the rear; but presently the contagion of the speaker's rushing thought reaches him, and he is drawn into the wake of that urgent ongoing; he is towed along in the great multitudinous convoy that follows the mighty motor-vessel steaming, unconscious of the weight it bears, across the sea of thought. The energy is sufficient for all; it overflows so amply that you scarcely feel it not to be your own energy. The writing is like in character to the speaking — continuous, no break, no shock, no rest, not much change of swifter and slower, till the end. The apparent mass of the speaker, physical and mental, might at first seem equal to making up a full adequate momentum, without multiplication by such a component of velocity; but by and by you come to feel that the motion is a necessary part of the power.

In the afternoon, Mr. Brooks took Luther's "The just shall live by faith," and preached from it extemporarily. The character of the composition and of the delivery was strikingly the same as that belonging to the morning's discourse. It was hurried, impetuous soliloquy; in this particular case, hurried first, and then impetuous. That is, I

judged from various little indications that Mr. Brooks used his will to urge himself on against some obstructiveness felt in the current mood and movement of his mind. But it was a noteworthy discourse, full and fresh with thought. The interpretation put upon Luther's doctrine of justification by faith was free rather than historic. If one should apply the formula, truth plus personality, the personality — Mr. Brooks's personality — would perhaps be found to prevail, in the interpretation, over the strict historic truth.

Thus far the report, made at the moment, of those two Sunday occasions of hearing Phillips Brooks "at home."

It was to the critic himself a welcome reassurance to receive, shortly after the first appearing of the following paper, a very carefully written letter of length, warmly approving it, from a distinguished divine, now no longer living, who had been a loyal and loving classmate of Bishop Brooks at Harvard. Personal touch, sufficiently long continued, is a means of knowing a man that nothing else can equal; and it may serve to give the reader of the criticism increased confidence in its conclusions concerning the intimate character, intellectual, moral, religious, of the man criticised, to learn that a college classmate, of competent qualification to judge, who knew him closely, was willing to attest the representation of him as sympathetically just and adequate. The attestation expressly included both what was said in unqualified, and what was said in qualified, praise of the illustrious subject.

PHILLIPS BROOKS

Phillips Brooks is easily foremost in fame among all the living pulpit orators of the Episcopal Church in America. This praise is more moderate in fact than in terms it seems; for the American Episcopal Church is not rich in great pulpit orators. At any rate, the praise is less than may in justice, nay, in justice must, be bestowed. Now that Henry Ward Beecher is silent, no pulpit voice speaks anywhere in this land that is heard farther than Phillips Brooks's, and at the same time heard with as much heed from the cultivated and intellectual as is his. Mr. Brooks enjoys justly the reputation of being a thinker as well as a preacher, a fruitful brain as well as an eloquent tongue. His quality, indeed, is somewhat like that of F. W. Robertson; like, but different no less. There was a strain of the morbidly intense in Robertson; but Mr. Brooks is, as it were, almost superfluously sane. His virile vigor overflows. The towering stature, the mighty mass, of the physical man but fitly symbolize the health, the robustness, of the intellect that is his.

Still there is a fineness, too, of fibre interwoven with the sinewy strength of Phillips Brooks's mind which modifies the impression of mere power in him, almost, at times, takes this away, replacing it, or half replacing it, with an impression of something different from power, something in fact which, though it is unmistakably masculine by quantity, is, in fundamental quality, feminine rather. There are, in short, moments with Mr. Brooks, when, for all his manly mind, he appears to tremble on the verge of being an outright sentimentalist. It is appearance only, not fact; but the appearance is so vividly like fact that its illusory character needs first, with some care, to be shown, before that high praise can safely be awarded to this remarkable man

which he deserves, and which the writer can at once gratify himself and serve his readers by freely, while discriminatively, bestowing.

Take, for instance, that idea which Mr. Brooks makes central and pivotal in his preaching, namely, the idea of the universal, indiscriminate fatherhood of God to men. In such expressions as those now to be quoted from him, of this idea, is it not the language of pure sentimentalism that at first thought Mr. Brooks seems to one to be using?

"The inspiring idea [of Jesus] is the fatherhood of God and the childhood of every man to Him. Upon the race and upon the individual, Jesus is always bringing into more and more perfect revelation the certain truth that man, and every man, is the child of God."

Mr. Brooks is very strong, very sweeping, not hastily but deliberately so, on this point. He says:

"This is the sum of the work of the Incarnation. . . . All statements concerning Him hold their truth within this truth, — that Jesus came to restore the fact of God's fatherhood to man's knowledge. . . . He is the redeemer of man into the fatherhood of God. . . . Man is the child of God by nature. He is ignorant and rebellious,— the prodigal child of God; but his ignorance and rebellion never break that first relationship. . . . To reassert the fatherhood and childhood as an unlost truth, and to reestablish its power as the central fact of life; to tell men that they were, and to make them actually be, the sons of God — that was the purpose of the coming of Jesus, and the shaping power of His life."

Mr. Brooks seems almost to be escaping, evading, the obligation to prove that his sentiment is the doctrine of Scripture, when he uses, concerning it, the following half mystical language:

"Of course, it is not possible to speak of such an idea — which is, indeed, the idea of the universe — as if it were a message intrusted to the Son of God when He came to be the Savior of

mankind. It was not only something which He knew and taught; it was something which He was."

Again, when you read confident guesses like the following, you seem to be listening rather to one who speaks from his own sentiment, than to one who gets his communication from authority outside of and above himself:

"He [Jesus] must have become aware that all men were God's sons, and felt the desire to tell them so and make their sonship a reality, kindling like fire within Him, just in proportion as He came to know, softly and gradually, under the skies of Galilee and the roof of the carpenter, the deep and absorbing mystery that He himself was the Son of God."

It does not take you by surprise — after an expression so close on the border of the sentimental as the foregoing — to find Mr. Brooks saying:

"It is not my purpose to prove here that this which I have given is a true statement of the idea of Jesus."

That looks, at first, like an easy air of superiority, on Mr. Brooks's part, in declining to seek, in Scripture, proof for his central idea. And when, notwithstanding, some ostensible proof from Scripture is adduced, the apparent negligence with which the process is conducted, confirms your impression that the speaker felt such resort on his part to be quite unnecessary. Mr. Brooks says:

"If any man had a doubt, I should only want to open the Gospel with him at four most solemn places."

Of these four places, the parable of the Prodigal Son is the first. This, Mr. Brooks dismisses, as perhaps, in the view of some, "too metaphorical," and turns to the "Lord's Prayer," so-called. He says:

"Hear Him [Jesus] teaching all men to pray, 'Our Father, who art in heaven.'"

Of course, the force of this reference lies in Mr. Brooks's expression "*all men.*" How negligently that expression is here used becomes at once apparent the moment you remember that Jesus was not speaking to "all men" when he taught that prayer. He had withdrawn from the general "multitudes" into a mountain, and it was "his disciples" to whom he now spoke. "His disciples" are, throughout the discourse, a limited class, discriminated from men in general, from "all men," in such expressions as, "When men shall reproach you."

This is according to the narrative of Matthew. Luke tells us that "one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach *us* to pray, even as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto *them*"— whereupon follows the alternative form of the same prayer. Jesus, therefore, in the expression, "Our Father," taught not the fatherhood of God to "all men," but the fatherhood of God to his own disciples.

Mr. Brooks's third place is that saying of Jesus, uttered by him when just risen from the dead: "I ascend unto my Father and to your Father." This — as Mr. Brooks himself intimates, but intimates without apparent consciousness that he thereby vacates his citation of all force to prove the universal fatherhood of God — this, I say, and this Mr. Brooks implies, establishes only God's relation of father to the "disciples" of Jesus.

Mr. Brooks's last text is an example of negligence, or of apparent negligence, on his part, more remarkable still. He quotes: "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

This, as a proof-text for "the certain truth that man, and every man, *is* a child of God"— assuredly it is surprising, extraordinary even. No one could have brought it forward as such who was not fully prepossessed with the persuasion of its being unnecessary to prove in any way whatever a doctrine assumed to be so self-evidently true. To any other man than such a man it must inevitably have occurred to inquire: "Why, if all men *are* indefeasibly children of God,

should it have been needful for Christ to give a certain limited number of men power (or privilege) to *become* such?"

Does such a course of remark from Mr. Brooks show that at heart he feels independent of Scripture, free to make Scripture mean whatever he chooses? It looks like that at first. But we should, so thinking, do Mr. Brooks injustice. He is truly and profoundly reverent, obediently so, in presence of the Word of God. How, then, explain a handling of texts that at least seems so irreverent? Thus: Mr. Brooks is right, and is scriptural, in his *thought;* it is only in his *image* for his thought that, whether or not right, he at least is not scriptural. His real reverence for Scripture as a whole simply did not keep him from displaying an apparent irreverence toward particular places of Scripture.

What Mr. Brooks means by the sonship of every man to God is every man's *potential* sonship to God. That adjective, or its equivalent, must be understood as silently present to qualify the seemingly unqualified assertion of universal human sonship of God, wherever such assertion occurs in Mr. Brooks's discourse. The fatherhood of God to mankind is simply Mr. Brooks's formula for expressing the idea contained in that Gospel-laden text, "God so loved the *world* that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

Scriptural, then, the thought is that underlies Mr. Brooks's formula. But is the formula itself scriptural? Yes and no, both at once; scriptural the formula is, but not scriptural as expression for that thought. God is willing to save everybody, and everybody that is willing to be saved by God, God saves. Those are the scriptural ideas, and those ideas are Mr. Brooks's. But the image or figure of fatherhood, on God's part, is used by the Bible in one application, and by Mr. Brooks in another. Everybody that *may be* saved (or, in one word, everybody) is God's child, according to Mr. Brooks; everybody that *is* saved is God's child, according to the Bible.

Of some confusion in thinking, I do not, in my own mind, acquit Mr. Brooks, while thus gladly acquitting him of any departure from scriptural truth in the final result of his thought. Unconsciously, he was justifying himself out of Scripture in two distinct particulars — particulars which he had carelessly permitted to become blended in one to his mind. The first particular was his idea itself, namely, the idea that God was willing to save everybody. The second particular was his choice of form for his idea, namely, the image of fatherhood, on God's part, to everybody. The parable of the Prodigal Son seemed for a moment to justify him in both particulars at once. In his idea it certainly did justify him; but in his form for his idea it only seemed to do so, for the passage was a parable. The idea having, in the first citation, been sufficiently justified, Mr. Brooks, apparently without perceiving that he does so, devotes the other three citations exclusively to adducing Scriptural examples for the use of the image of Divine fatherhood. These, of course, he easily finds; but they, when found, prove to present fatherhood in a quite different relation from that in which he himself was presenting it. Mr. Brook's scriptural examples make God father to a select class of persons, instead of making God father to all men indiscriminately.

Does, then, an unconscious wavering in Mr. Brooks's own mind betray itself — it at least seems to do so — in those places where, with one breath, he declares that "man, and every man, *is* the child of God," and, then, with the next breath, speaks of "making men *actually* be the sons of God?" Perhaps not; but if not, there must be supposed a contrast not expressed existing in the speaker's mind between potential and actual sonship to God. It is potential sonship to God that Mr. Brooks predicates of "man, and every man"; it is actual sonship that he seeks to help every man realize. We can all accept his thought thus interpreted; his expression for his thought we could, some of us, sincerely wish were one less likely to be mischievously mis-

understood. But Mr. Brooks's own belief evidently is, that he shall best win men to be, by freely declaring to them that they are (potentially), sons of God. The suppressed qualifying word often, it is much to be feared, the average hearer will neglect to supply. Told that he is now, nay, almost that he is forever to be, a child of God, he may be misled to draw the Universalist conclusion, and, for the present, rest in the assurance that, whatever his actual attitude may be toward God, God will certainly find out some way at last to rescue his own child. Such an assurance Mr. Brooks nowhere, that I find, in terms offers to any one; but, on the other hand, such an assurance Mr. Brooks in terms nowhere, that I find, takes away. What his own intimate personal conviction on the point involved may be, he seems to cover in impenetrable silence.

It was necessary to be thus full on the topic of Mr. Brooks's favorite idea, that of the universal fatherhood of God, both because the idea is so deep, so central, in his teachings, and because it was not possible in less space to reach fairly that favorable interpretation for the idea, without the distinct and verified statement of which, the praise to be bestowed on the general tenor of his discourse might naturally be mistaken as bestowed on doctrine at variance with Scripture. One may regret that Mr. Brooks has chosen, as he has, his form of expression; but one can remain free, notwithstanding, to be glad and thankful that underneath the doubtful language is couched a meaning so true and so noble. If Mr. Brooks had really meant that "man, and every man, *is* the child of God" now, in the same sense in which Jesus seeks to make men "actually be" children of God, why that notion one would have to pronounce a mere sentiment of the preacher, instead of a doctrine from above; and Mr. Brooks would then be, what, in fact he for a moment seemed, but only seemed, a religious sentimentalist, instead of a teacher of Divine truth.

The foregoing citations have all of them been made from Mr. Brooks's volume containing the lectures delivered by

him in Philadelphia on the John Bohlen foundation in 1879. In these lectures it is that Mr. Brooks most expressly expounds that idea of the fatherhood of God which is implicitly present throughout all his teaching and preaching. One more citation from the same source seems to seal it for certain that I have not gone amiss in favorably interpreting, as I have done, Mr. Brooks's often too ambiguous expressions on this capital point. Fitly alluding to that founder, "on whose behalf," as he says, he was "in some sort" speaking, the lecturer testified that he had known no man "more inspired by his Lord's revelation that he was, *more obedient and trustful to his Lord's authority* in order that he might become, the son of God." To be the son of God did not, then, according to Mr. Brooks, render it unnecessary that a man should also become the son of God. This can only mean that the human sonship to God revealed as already existing is potential sonship, and that the actual sonship is the result of a becoming.

Of Mr. Brooks's John Bohlen lectures (published under the title, "The Influence of Jesus on the Moral Life of Man"), it must be said that they form on the whole the least satisfactory of the author's works. They have the infelicity of being an exposition less of a thought than of a figurative expression for a thought, and that a figurative expression already by Scripture far more happily appropriated to a different thought from the thought, great indeed, and true in itself, to which the speaker sought now to adapt it. One becoming acquainted with Mr. Brooks first through his "Influence of Jesus," would then have to read him somewhat largely, as he appears in other expressions of himself, to overcome a feeling, quite contrary to the fact, that he is a religious sentimentalist.

To one who does read Mr. Brooks somewhat largely, through the full range of his productions, the quality in him that at length comes to seem the most striking, as it is also the most persuasive, is a compound quality, a character made up of two elements, an intellectual and a moral; or to name

them in the true order of their actual precedence in Mr. Brooks's case, a moral and an intellectual. The twofold trait to which I refer is moral height resting on intellectual breadth. The breadth is nearly enough for the height; which is much to say, for the height is great. I should not know what writer to name as surpassing Mr. Brooks in constant noble elevation of moral tone. To read him is like breathing mountain air. You are braced, invigorated, exhilarated. I will defy you to be a mean man *while* you are enjoying Mr. Brooks's discourses. The exercise is a specific — as long as it lasts. Your moral nature is aerated, etherealized, in drawing that empyreal breath. Of course this experience of yours penetrates no deeper than your sentiment, unless you convert noble inspiration into noble character and noble conduct. But that superficialness of result, if it exist, will be your fault, not the fault of the author. The inspiration was heavenly all the same.

And truly of heaven is the inspiration that is breathed in Mr. Brooks's productions. I make in this respect no distinction among his printed works, which, all of them, if not formally sermons, and therefore formally religious, are sermons in effect and in effect religious. Mr. Brooks never ceases to be a preacher in what he gives to the public. A real preacher, too, and not a mere pulpit orator. His moral tone is a distinctly Christian moral tone. Christ is Lord to him, and he constantly seeks to make Christ Lord to his fellow-men. Those words of his already quoted fairly represent the conscious purpose of his ministry — the words I mean used by him in describing his friend: "*Obedient* and trustful to his Lord's *authority* in order that he might become the son of God." The plea of "sonship to God," the claim of "love" for Christ, do not, with Mr. Brooks, supersede and replace painstaking *obedience*.

Mr. Brooks has a striking sermon on loving God "with the mind." He could write such a sermon, for, evidently, his own mind takes joyful part in his affection for God. Accordingly, the two elements which I have attempted to

distinguish as moral height and intellectual breadth run together in him and become inseparably one. The height is intellectual as well as moral; and the breadth is moral as well as intellectual.

In my own individual judgment, Mr. Brooks's moral breadth and inclusiveness are in measure too generous. He passes the bound in, for example, his kindness toward the ethnic religions, as Buddhism, apparently believing these better than in strict truth they are. You perhaps say, That, if a mistake on his part — is it not an intellectual rather than a moral mistake? Intellectual, yes; but having its spring in moral character.

That spirit in Mr. Brooks which might be called his "Broad-Church" tendency, found, perhaps, its extreme expression in his sermon delivered on occasion of the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of Harvard. He went a long distance there in the liberal direction — too long, I think. But he fetched himself short again at last by loyally yielding to the tether which seems always to hold him intellectually as well as spiritually obedient to Christ. He closed by saying: "May He, who has been our Master from the far-off beginning, be our Master ever more and more acknowledged, ever more and more obeyed, on even to the distant end!"

The truth is, Mr. Brooks is magnanimous; but — one hates to say it, for it seems like a confession of the opposite fault in one's self — he is too magnanimous. He thinks too well of human nature; or, at least, he trusts too much in the appeal to potential goodness in man. This appeal, however, is his ripe and deliberate choice. If the choice is a mistake, the mistake is at least one honorable to the man who commits it — who commits it, that is to say, like Mr. Brooks, in clear sincerity and truth. For Mr. Brooks no doubt honestly thinks that men have been preached to too much on their bad side and not enough on their good side. He will do what he can to redress the balance.

We thus come upon the true explanation of language, on

Mr. Brooks's part, that costs to the casual reader or hearer concerned for the truth of the Gospel, real anxiety not unmixed with sorrow. To a great popular assembly gathered one Sunday evening, last winter, in Faneuil Hall, Mr. Brooks preached his favorite idea from the text, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." He then, as reported, apparently *verbatim,* by the Boston *Herald* said:

"We are His children, whether the best or the worst of us, those who are living the most upright lives, as well as those the most profligate, are all Christ's children."

He said, also:

"Men are so commonly preached to that they are a great deal wickeder than they are, that they must not set so high worth upon humanity. I tell you we want another kind of preaching along with that. There is in every man something greater than he has begun to dream of. Men are nobler than they think themselves. When a man gives himself in consecration to Jesus Christ, then that nobility comes forth until he shines like a star. *Go home and believe in yourselves more.*"

The words I have italicized are certainly words that would read strangely out of place in the Bible. They seem to contain advice far from soundly evangelical. They look like encouraging pride more than humility. But Mr. Brooks did not so mean them. He meant them for the potential man, not for the actual; and so taken they are true. The trouble is, that the actual man will, in so many cases, keep them to himself, and never pass them on to the potential man for whom they were intended!

Almost worse appears the following expression:

"What He [Jesus Christ] is trying to do is to make these people ["the violent, the most dissipated, the most brutalized,"] feel just as he feels; *not to put into them something that is not there, but to call out that which is in them.*"

This certainly seems to teach that men need nothing but good training in order to develop into Christians. But, in truth, Mr. Brooks is thinking all the time of what men are *potentially,* of what they may become. Does this seem over-strained charity in interpreting — perverse determination, on the present writer's part, to bring Mr. Brooks out orthodox, even in spite of himself? Read, again, the following, from Mr. Brooks's last volume, "Twenty Sermons," p. 217:

"I have no patience with the foolish talk which would make sin nothing but imperfection, and would preach that man needs nothing but to have his deficiencies supplied, to have his native goodness educated and brought out, in order to be all that God would have him be. The horrible incompetency of that doctrine must be manifest enough to any man who knows his own heart, or who listens to the tumult of wickedness which arises up from all the dark places of the earth. Sin is a dreadful, positive, malignant thing. What the world in its worst part needs is not to be developed, but to be destroyed. Any other talk about it is shallow and mischievous folly."

The last two citations preceding might seem to leave the preacher involved in hopeless self-contradiction. I have no care to mediate between them; let them quarrel if they will. But of course the latter is the true expression of Mr. Brooks's final thought. The Faneuil Hall discourse has the air of an extemporary utterance, but at any rate the newspaper report has never received the formal authorization of the preacher.

Now, it is of course at once a serious deduction from the total net good influence of a preacher that you have to defend him elaborately from the appearance of teaching false doctrine. And no relief is it to one's regret to consider that the most of those who will regard the defense as unnecessary will also regard it as misleading; for with such persons the apparently false doctrine of Mr. Brooks will have the practical effect of doctrine really false, since they, understanding it in its apparent sense, will accept it as in that sense true.

The whole spirit of Mr. Brooks's teaching forbids us to

suspect that he lightly plays with expression, like a man having no fixed beliefs of his own, and willing to let himself be taken differently by one hearer or reader and another, as each may choose to take him. He is a serious and earnest soul, with the highest ideal of truth and manliness. In short, he is perfectly genuine.

And we thus come upon what is most admirable of all in his *style*, that is, exquisite genuineness. His own description of what style should be is an unconscious likeness taken from himself. In his "Lectures on Preaching" he says that style should be "so simple and flexible an organ that through it the moving and changing thought can utter itself freely." This is exactly true of Mr. Brooks's style. The consequence is, that whenever Mr. Brooks's thought rises, his style rises with it, and when his thought sinks, his style sinks with it. His style, in short, is constantly just equal to his thought. This is meant as almost the highest praise; but it allows one still to admit that sometimes Mr. Brooks's style is very faulty. The chief fault of his style is the fault of its chief virtue. Its chief virtue lies in its being simple, straightforward, easy, unaffected, natural; its chief fault is its tendency to become negligent, negligent to the verge, or beyond it, of downright slovenliness. This, however, without losing its constant character of genuineness; for the expression is negligent generally when there was negligence in the thought. If Mr. Brooks has, and occasionally he does have, a rather vague sentimentalism of view to express, his expression sympathizes and becomes unsatisfactory accordingly. For instance, in his sermon on "Standing before God" ("Twenty Sermons"), he begins by saying: "The life which we are living now is more aware than we know of the life which is to come;" a statement, of course, tantamount to laying it down that we know more than we know that we know of the life beyond life. The first page or two following of the discourse agrees in character well with this opening sentence. And the whole introduction scarcely introduces the sermon.

Not unfrequently Mr. Brooks multiplies his relative clauses to a singular degree of perplexity. In his sermon on "The Mystery of Light," he says:

"Now and then in those first chapters of the Gospels He [Jesus] says some deep word or does some unexpected action *which* seems to startle them [the disciples] and brings a puzzled question *which* is like the first drop before the tempest of puzzled questions concerning Christ *which* has come since and which is still raging around us; but generally in those earliest days they have very few questions to ask; they seem to understand Him easily."

One feels like punning horribly and pronouncing such a sentence "bewhiched." Here, as usual, the negligent style coincides with negligent thought. For that early familiarity which Mr. Brooks supposes, on the disciples' part, that absence of wondering awe, in their intercourse with Jesus, as contrasted with their later behavior toward him, appears to be a mere figment of fancy, when you recall, for instance, Peter's abashed exclamation to Jesus uttered *before* he was properly a disciple, a "follower," at all: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

To say that Mr. Brooks does not always master his pronouns completely is only to say that his style stops short of perfection. Certainly there would have been added pungency in the pungent sentence following had the true reference of the "it" in it been more instantly and more unmistakably apparent: "I cannot know — perhaps you do not know yourself — how much there may be in your heart which is so bound up with old sin that you do not want *it* destroyed completely." Macaulay would not have scrupled to use his noun over again and say: "that you do not want to have *that old sin* destroyed completely." (I remember one place in which Macaulay repeats a substantive, and that a proper name, no less than four times within the bounds of a very short sentence — just to avoid a slight ambiguity that would have resulted from the substitution of pronouns.)

Of careless, as broadly distinguished from careful, repetitions of words in a sentence, Mr. Brooks furnishes too many examples. If he had been in the habit — and every writer, but especially every writer for the public ear, should be in the habit — of *hearing* (imaginatively) his sentences in process of flowing from his pen, he could hardly have suffered himself to write for example thus: "More than all of *these,* we who are preaching in such days as *these* need to understand *these* methods," etc.

One feels like thus referring such a point to the ear. Still, Mr. Brooks's ear itself may be at fault, and thus perhaps is to be accounted for a certain lack of rhythm, of harmony as it were of prose numbers, in his style. For that consummate grace of the orator's rhetoric this great preacher does not command. A nice ear in him would alone, even without a nice literary conscience to enforce reference for verification, have prevented his making the strange transformation he does in one place of a striking poetical quotation introduced by him. Coleridge's fine lines:

> Yet haply there will come a weary day,
> When over*tasked* at length
> Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.
> Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
> Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
> And, both supporting, does the work of both —

are set running narrowly down Mr. Brooks's page, as follows:

> "There will come a weary day
> When *overtaxed* at length,
> Both hope and love beneath
> The weight give way.
> Then with a statue's smile,
> A statue's strength,
> Patience, nothing loth,
> And uncomplaining, does
> The work of both."

Do I seem to be applying a literary standard to what is homiletical rather than literary? I acknowledge the existence here of a valid distinction. But I insist that there is a true ethical, and even religious, teaching force in what I have elsewhere called "strict literary conscience," applied to such things as are now pointed out. And this series of criticisms has a faithful and serious aim to help make the prevalent practice of the pulpit, even in subordinate things, better and better. Is not the aim worthy?

Negligence not verbal and not literary is exemplified, when, on page 17, "Sermons Preached in English Churches," Mr. Brooks attributes to "a young man" the question, really asked by quite another person than the one the preacher must have been imagining, as also in a quite different spirit: "Lord, which is the great commandment?" It seems also a freedom hardly compatible with reverence, reverence at the moment effectively working in the preacher's heart, for Mr. Brooks to say boldly even concerning the "young man" of whom he was mistakenly thinking:

> "The man saw a new vision of himself, a vision of a life filled with a passionate love of the Holy One, and so he went back determined not to rest until he had attained all holiness."

What warrant, outside of his own creative imagination, could Mr. Brooks adduce for making such a statement? The man who asked Jesus the question actually quoted by Mr. Brooks did so "*tempting* him"; and of the man who asked Jesus, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" and whom, as the touching record reads, Jesus beholding "loved," the final word given is that he "went away sorrowful for he was one that had great possessions."

It is a strange inadvertence, once again, for Mr. Brooks to take as his text, "Jesus said unto him, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy mind,'" Matt. xxii:37, and set out by saying that this is an injunction addressed by Christ "to his disciples"— the fact, of course,

being that the words form part of a reply made by Christ to "a lawyer" "tempting him."

Less pardonable seems it, when, treating the text, "The Spirit said, Behold, three men seek thee," Mr. Brooks makes the remark, as if quite in parallel with his text for idea of Divine authority involved: "The artist dreams his dream, and as he thinks upon the vision, the Spirit says, Behold the marble seeks thee." Does Mr. Brooks seriously justify such a mode of speaking? Does he really think that the Scripture text with which he was dealing is a mere Orientalism, not intended by God to convey to men the idea of any Divine inspiration for Peter other than that which visits equally the artist when the artist feels prompted to find a statue in a block of marble? He must know well that the turn of expression he employs is adapted to insinuate that thought. But if that thought is true, what, logically, becomes of the *authority* which Mr. Brooks undoubtedly acknowledges in the Bible? These questions, it is Mr. Brooks himself, and not his loyal critic, that raises.

If now we should note that Mr. Brooks says "richen" (for "enrich"), that he coins for himself the noun "worldfull," we should nearly have exhausted the list of approaches to affectation in vocabulary that could be charged upon him, so nobly and simply pure is he in his diction. "Pled" for "pleaded" is, perhaps, to be reckoned in addition here; that form, in a scholar so well-bred, can hardly be an inadvertence. That he should quote Tennyson, "For the individual withers and the *race* [instead of "world"] is more and more"— that he should speak of Montaigne's sitting "in his library at *Paris*," when, as everybody knows, the old French essayist's historic library was (and I suppose still is) at Montaigne, in Gascony — must be chargeable to treacherous memory in the preacher.

But the largeness, the large-heartedness, of this messenger of the truth, seems to rebuke all petty fault-finding. To be sure, Mr. Brooks is large enough, and large-hearted enough, not to resent, nay, to welcome, all helps to perfection in

himself, even more, all helps, supplied out of his own shortcomings, to perfection in others. No one can read his "Lectures on Preaching" without feeling this. I now name that one by eminence of his books, which is on the whole the best expression of Mr. Brooks's moral and intellectual character. I said that to read Mr. Brooks was like breathing mountain air. To read his sermons is like that in one particular not hitherto indicated. The atmosphere of his sermons, besides being pure and tonic, is somewhat difficult to breathe, being, as it were, sublimated and over-rare. Not all lungs are easily equal to it. What I mean is, that application to the everyday needs of everyday people is comparatively wanting.

The following quotation will illustrate this remark of mine. I venture to assume that it really is a sentence of Bishop Brooks's, although I am not able to refer it to the place where it occurs in his writings. It met my eye attributed to him in a newspaper. It is self-verified as his, both by its style of expression and by its peculiar quality of thought:

"Lesser things will drop out as the hand closes upon the larger duty or the greater blessing, just as the hand that reaches out to grasp the great strong oak lets go its hold on the blade of grass it had gathered."

Now such a comparison as that is evidently the product of closet study and not of contact with life. Who ever reached out a hand to "grasp" a "great strong oak?" Could a "great strong oak" be "grasped" by any hand? And a babe in age it must be that could have "gathered" a "blade of grass," to hold it. The comparison could not come home to any one's actual experience. Is it mere whimsey to imagine that had Bishop Brooks married, "life in a new rhythm," such as a rich nature like his might have lived in that changed state, would have gone far toward enabling him to escape that certain clinging celibate quality,

if I may venture so to speak, which I seem to feel affecting almost all his productions?

Without intending or desiring to do so, Mr. Brooks addresses himself to the few rather than to the many. It is a kind of spiritual elixir instead of common respirable air that he provides for his reader or his hearer to breathe. This is less true of his lectures on preaching than it is of his preaching. His lectures on preaching form a volume as replete with practical wisdom as it is instinct with noble inspiration. I wish they could be universally read by ministers. No minister could read them without being helped by them — helped intellectually, helped morally, helped spiritually. I rejoice in such a book. I believe in such a minister as Mr. Brooks therein sets before his reader in ideal.

And such a minister as he describes, one feels that Mr. Brooks must, himself, in good measure, be, or he could never so have framed his description. The ideal minister will, according to Mr. Brooks, seek to lead each soul into "entire obedience to God." He will say to every one, "The meeting of your will with the will of God, whatever it may bring, is the purpose of all discipline." "Obedient love! Loving obedience! That is what binds the soul of the less to the soul of the greater everywhere. I give myself to the Eternal Christ, and in His eternity I find my own. In His *service* I am bound to Him." Such quotations fairly represent the spirit of Mr. Brooks's preaching. Largeness, "tolerance," charity, freedom, are great ideas with him; but a man *obedient,* not indeed to "law," but to a personal "Lord," this, and not a man "full of unrestrained will," is the true ideal man whom this preacher's whole strife seeks to realize. Heady self-will, superiority to Christ's commands as judged not useful, finds no encouragement with Mr. Brooks. He knows nothing of any transcendental sonship to God that releases from obligation, or from necessity, to obey. He trains no disciple to forget that even Jesus, himself, though He was a son, yet learned

obedience. Mr. Brooks warns young preachers against that spirit in religion which "disowning doctrine and depreciating law" "asserts that religion belongs to feeling, and that there is no truth but love." He says: "The hard theology is bad. *The soft theology is worse.* You must count your work unsatisfactory, unless you waken men's brains and stir their consciences. Let them see clearly that *you value no feeling that is not the child of truth and the father of duty.*" "Those who honestly own for *Master* Jesus Christ," is Mr. Brooks's short, comprehensive description of Christians.

"Will-dedication," an expression of Mr. Brooks's, and "unrestrained will," an expression of Mr. Beecher's, each answering to an idea in human character approved by its respective author, will give the contrast in tone and spirit between the two preachers. Now a preacher may make loss of many particular points of truth in his teaching, but if he teaches Christ as a personal *Master* whom it is the whole of religion to *obey,* then the chief point of truth is safe in his hands. Mr. Brooks's example stands here in a contrast, for which we may be grateful, with the example, once overwhelmingly strong in influence, of Mr. Beecher.

I feel bound now, finally, to explain that the high praise of Mr. Brooks's work, which, on the whole, I have here been gratefully glad to pronounce, must be understood to apply only to such work of his as he himself has decided to be considerate enough for appearance in authorized form of publication. Many of the newspaper reports of his sermons present him at serious disadvantage. There must, one would say, be a wide gulf of contrast, in Mr. Brooks's case, between his best and his worst. A certain forlorn comfort may be gleaned by the average minister from knowing that one who can preach so well as does Mr. Brooks in his authorized works, can also preach so ill, as does Mr. Brooks sometimes in the newspapers.

I have said nothing of that part of Mr. Brooks's pulpit eloquence which consists in delivery. And little really needs

to be said. The hearer has a man before him in the pulpit whose mere physical force might enable him to discharge his speech at his audience with the resistless energy of a catapult. And pretty much this is what Mr. Brooks does. The preacher, from the very first word, begins his sermon, usually read from a manuscript, at a prodigious rate of speed in utterance. The words hurry out as if the weight of the Atlantic were on the reservoir behind them to give the escaping current irresistible head. There is no let-up, there could be no acceleration, to the rush of the torrent. You feel at first as if you never should be able to follow at such a breakneck pace. But you soon find yourself caught up and borne forward, as it were, without your following, on the mighty breast of the onrushing flood. What is more, presently you enjoy riding so fast. There is a kind of impartation and transformation of personal living force, by virtue of which you not only understand everything uttered, but with ease understand it, more swiftly than your wont. The novel experience is delightful.

Beyond what has thus been described, or hinted, there is not much that is peculiar or extraordinary in Mr. Brooks's delivery. I am told that his phenomenal speed in speaking is an expedient adopted by him to overcome a natural tendency on his part to stammering. He speaks, then, as fast as he can, simply because if he should speak slower he could not speak at all. His regular hearers, I believe, come to like his exaggerated rapidity of utterance — which fact, if it is a fact, may, at least, encourage every minister to expect that if he can only accumulate undoubted oratorical virtues enough to be for these enthusiastically admired and loved, his very faults, too, in that case, will be turned from faults into virtues.

I feel, in dismissing this subject, that, what with defensive interpretation first to be made on Mr. Brooks's behalf, and then with minor faults in his style to be duly pointed out, I have failed to express, proportionately, the sense that I have of the extraordinary merit and value of Mr. Brooks's works

as a whole. I must not refrain from recording my own personal debt to this preacher. I have felt his spirit as a noble contagion. A loftier ideal, more consistently sustained, more persuasively presented, of personal character in Christ than that which animates the preaching of Mr. Brooks, I should not know where in any uninspired literature to look with the hope of finding. It follows hard after Paul.

V

ALEXANDER McLAREN

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

On reviewing, for the purpose of this republication, the criticism of sixteen years ago devoted to Dr. McLaren,* I could not but become freshly aware how very laudatory it is. Shall I now, on soberer, more mature consideration, abate something from the praise bestowed, or at least affect it with a larger amount of stricture? I can conscientiously answer, and with heartiness, No. I can go further, and say that the praise now seems to me less, instead of more, than was deserved. "Than *is* deserved," I should perhaps rather say. For, during this interval of sixteen years, Dr. McLaren has gone on, until now he is seventy-eight years of age, steadily maintaining not only, but actually advancing, both the quantity and the quality of his yearly homiletic production, and thus presenting an example of prosperous achievement which I believe to be unparalleled in the history of the Christian pulpit. At this moment, I doubt not that a poll of all the judges in the world qualified to pronounce on such a point, would yield a unanimous sentence assigning to Alexander McLaren a place not second to that of any other man in Christian history as a producer of sermons. As a "producer of sermons," I say now by choice, not as a "preacher." I leave out of account at this moment, the element of oral delivery, a prime element in preaching.

* Dr. McLaren, in reply to a question from the present writer as to what spelling he preferred of his name, expressed a degree of indifference in the matter; but, in point of his own habit, the autograph letters from him received at different times by me show the signature written as above, that is, "McLaren," not "M'Laren," not "MacLaren," and not "Maclaren." To disregard his own example and be a little over-nice, I may say that in his autograph signature he sets a dot or period underneath the "c" — of course to indicate the abbreviated character of the patronymic prefix as thus written.

What the secret is of the phenomenon thus presented I attempt to lay bare in the criticism following. In one word, it lies in his *method* therein described. But that word, as, left unexplained, it might be understood, would be a very superficial account of the matter. Dr. McLaren's method lay in the man himself who evolved the method, and who pursued it faithfully. It is about equally an intellectual, and a moral, triumph that Dr. McLaren has achieved — has achieved, and is achieving.

I count it among the true privileges of my experience in England, that I enjoyed an opportunity of personal contact and free interchange of thought with this illustrious man. I wish it were proper to disclose all of the interesting *memorabilia* of his conversation. A few things I may take the liberty of reporting. He spoke with the utmost cordiality of high appreciation concerning Mr. Spurgeon, from an interview with whom I was at the moment come. He confirmed without qualification an opinion which I ventured to express, that Mr. Spurgeon possessed all the native force and aptitude of mind needed to have made him distinctly a scholar and a thinker, instead of the great popular voice that he had chosen chiefly to be.

What seems to me now, in the retrospect of the years since that hour of mine with Dr. McLaren, not a little singular, is that he intimated some thought of giving up his work in Manchester soon after returning from a trip then about to be undertaken by him to Australia. He even contemplated the possibility of his coming to America, asking me, in apparent modest unconsciousness of the fame that already was his in this country, whether I thought that some pulpit might be open to him among us, if he should come. I could of course reassure him on this point, and I did so. Subsequently remembering such a hint from him, I conceived the idea of securing for the University of Chicago the services

of this incomparable man as University preacher. At my urgent suggestion, the President wrote proposing the idea to him, and, as the President had previously requested me to do, I myself addressed a letter to Dr. McLaren on the same subject. Alas, I had not considered that already by that time some seven years had elapsed since Dr. McLaren dropped those words in my ear; and, reminded of this interval of time, I was not surprised, though I did regret, to receive a reply from him disappointing to my hopes for the University. He expressed his grateful sense of the honor done him in the overture, as also a just appreciation of the great opportunity offered, but he decided that upon the whole he had better finish the work of his life where he had wrought it so long, and remain at Union Chapel in Manchester — which accordingly he has done, to the joy of his church and congregation, who have made him at length a kind of pastor *emeritus*, releasing him from obligation to perform regular service as their minister.

On the completion of the fiftieth year of his ministry, Dr. McLaren was given a "Complimentary Breakfast" in London to celebrate the occasion. What was then said to him, or about him in his presence, though very interesting, is perhaps less important for us here than what he himself said in response. I quote a few words from the report of his remarks given in the London "Baptist Magazine":

"I dare not speak about attainments. I may venture to speak about aims, especially because I think that I have a number of my younger brethren here this morning, and I would like to give a last dying speech and confession to them. I began my ministry, and, thank God, I have been able to keep to that as my aim — I say nothing about attainments — with the determination of concentration of all my available strength on the work, the proper work of the Christian ministry, the pulpit; and I believe that the secret of success for all our ministers lies very largely in the simple charm of concentrating their intellectual force on the

one work of preaching. I have tried, and I am thankful to Dr. Angus for his words on that matter, to make my ministry a ministry of exposition of scripture. I know that it has failed in many respects; but I will say that I have endeavored from the beginning to the end to make that a characteristic of my public work. And I have tried to preach Jesus Christ, and the Jesus Christ not of the gospels only, but the Christ of the gospels and the epistles. He is the same. Dear young brethren, I believe that the one thing that the world wants is the redemption, the power of that gospel on the individual soul; and that men know they want it. Dr. Johnson once said in his wise way, 'Nothing odd lasts,' and I believe that, too. 'Nothing odd lasts'; but Christ lasts, and man's sin lasts, and man's need lasts, and we have got to preach Christ and him crucified, the Savior of mankind. And I have tried to preach Christ as if I believed in him, not as if I had hesitations and peradventures and limitations. And I have tried to preach him as if I lived on him; and that is the bottom of it all, that we shall ourselves feed on the truth that we proclaim to others. So if my words can reach any of my dear younger brethren this morning I do want to say: Concentrate yourselves on the work of your ministry, preach the Bible and its truth, preach Christ the Redeemer, preach him with all your heart, lift up your voice, lift it up with strength, be not afraid. We know that the Son of God has come; and he has given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. Brethren, depend upon it that if these be the themes and that be the spirit of our ministry, whether they will bear, or whether they will forbear, they will know that there has been a prophet among them."

Long will men know, after Dr. McLaren has "put off this tabernacle"— in which, to our blessing, may he many years yet continue to abide!— that there has been indeed a prophet among them; for the great library of sermons that he will have bequeathed in print to the future, will make that result happily sure.

ALEXANDER McLAREN

Dr. McLaren is eminently a preachers' preacher. By this I do not mean — as in saying the same thing, for example, of Dr. Bushnell, I might — that his sermons constitute a mine of material and resource from which preachers may draw. Dr. McLaren is not primarily, as Dr. Bushnell primarily was, a free, original, and fructifying thinker, who happens to occupy a pulpit. He is a true and proper preacher, and not a thinker half misplaced. But he is a preacher such as preachers in particular appreciate and enjoy. His singular skill in homiletic workmanship is a marvel and an inspiration to them. Seldom has a more cunning craftsman, one at every point less needing to be ashamed, wrought in the pulpit. This, preachers, of course, are especially qualified to feel, and this it is which makes Dr. McLaren peculiarly a preachers' preacher. Preachers learn method from him, if they do not from him so much derive thought.

Still, Dr. McLaren is in a very high degree a thoughtful preacher. Of thoughts — of thoughts rather than of thought, if one may make such a paradoxical distinction — any chance sermon of Dr. McLaren's is likely to be full. The essential preacher deals in thoughts, while the essential thinker deals in thought. Dr. Bushnell was an essential thinker, but Dr. McLaren is an essential preacher. He thinks for the pulpit, as Dr. Bushnell thought for the closet. Dr. McLaren has done what Dr. Shedd recommends and President Robinson warns against — each authority speaking therein with excellent reason — he has "cultivated the homiletic habit." Save for an extraordinarily vital, as distinguished from a merely mechanical, quality steadily maintained in Dr. McLaren's discourse, you might half suspect that his mind must, through long exclusive application of faculty to the produc-

ing of sermons, have become in a sort automatic in its homiletic action; such is the inevitable, unerring precision with which it works, and such, within certain limits, is the flawless perfection of its results.

Those results are wonderfully even in value reckoned throughout from one sermon to another. The average standard is high, but the uniformity with which the standard is constantly maintained — that is the thing most noteworthy, as it is the thing most characteristic, and the most nearly unique, in Dr. McLaren's production, whether considered in the single particular sermon, or in the whole continuous tenor of his preaching. I cannot say that an impression of facility in working is also made, or at least that such an impression is made in any degree commensurate with the impression made of a certain fatal infallible certitude and exactness. One feels a little — let us even admit, a little too much — the strain of intention on the part of the preacher. There is cost to him involved in the value to us. But what a fault — if a fault! The very rarest of excesses in the very rarest of virtues; the virtue, namely, of good, honest, hard work. Would that what exceeds here in Dr. McLaren could be judiciously distributed to the rest of us!

What I have pronounced the chief peculiarity (constituting, at the same time, a distinguishing excellence) in Dr. McLaren's pulpit oratory as submitted in print — I mean the sustained and uniform high average of quality it shows — is due in great part to his method. His method is therefore preeminently worthy of study.

Of course, I cannot now wish to be understood that mere method, apart from that virtue in the man — virtue mental and moral both — which first produced the method, and since has steadily kept the method at work — I cannot mean that this alone constitutes the secret of Dr. McLaren's remarkable achievement. But Dr. McLaren's individual original gift is a thing incommunicable, while happily his method of working is not. This latter may be found out, and then so stated in words that whosoever will may learn it and put it

in practice. Whosoever will; but will is a great matter here. It is something more than bare willingness. Willingness is negative; will is positive. Willingness is passive; will is active. Willingness raises no obstacles; will overcomes all obstacles. Will, in short, *will*.

What, then, is the master method according to which Dr. McLaren, in producing his sermons, proceeds?

The first element of it, logically first, and first in importance, is a certain moral, issuing in a corresponding mental, habit — a habit of submission, on the preacher's part, sincere and utter submission, involving the whole man, to the absolute and ultimate authority of the Word of God as contained in the Bible, and therefore as contained in the text chosen for any given particular occasion. Dr. McLaren thus begins by approaching his text in the spirit of a learner. He does not bring with him a thought or a doctrine purveyed from some quarter outside of the Bible, or perchance laboriously evolved from his own inner consciousness, which is now to be somehow ingeniously injected into his text, in order to be ingeniously thence derived again — all with homiletic sleight-of-hand, wonderful, rather than edifying, to hearers. Quite in contrast with such a procedure, Dr. McLaren sets the wholesome example of laying, himself, a listening ear to the lively oracles of God. He will not speak until he hears. He will first learn and afterward teach.

What I now mean may best be shown in specific example. Scarcely choosing at all — for Dr. McLaren's habit seems to exclude exception — I light upon this; it is the beginning of a sermon entitled "God's True Treasure in Man." The text is a double one:

"The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."— Deut. xxxii:9.

"Jesus Christ (who) gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people."—Titus ii: 14.

"In my last sermon I dealt with the thought that man's true

treasure is in God. My text then was: 'The Lord is the portion of my inheritance; Thou maintainest my lot,' and the following words. You observe the correspondence between these words and those of my first text: 'The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.' The correspondence in the original is not quite so marked as it is in our Authorized Version. but still the idea in the two passages is the same.

"You may remember that I said then that persons could possess persons only by love, sympathy and communion. From that it follows that the possession must be mutual; or, in other words, that only he can say 'Thou art mine' who can say I am thine.' And so, to possess God and to be possessed by God are but two ways of putting the same fact. The Lord is the portion of His people' and 'The Lord's portion is His people' are the same truth in a double form.

"Then my second text clearly quotes the well-known utterance that lies at the foundation of the national life of Israel: 'Ye shall be unto me a peculiar treasure above all people,' and claims that privilege, like all Israel's privileges, for the Christian Church. In like manner Peter (1 Peter ii:9) quotes the same words, 'a peculiar people,' as properly applying to Christians. I need scarcely remind you that 'peculiar' here is used in its proper original sense of 'belonging to,' or, as the Revised Version gives it, 'a people for God's own possession,' and has no trace of the modern signification of 'singular.' Similarly, we find Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, giving both sides of the idea of the inheritance, in intentional juxtaposition, when he speaks (i:14) of the 'earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of God's own possession.' In the words before us we have the same idea; and this text tells us besides, how Christ, the revealer of God, wins men for Himself, and what manner of men they must be whom He counts as His.

"Therefore there are, as I take it, three things to be spoken about now. First, God has a special ownership in some people. Second, God owns these people because He has given Himself to them. Third, God possesses, and is possessed by, His inheritance, that He may give and receive services of love. Or, in briefer words, I have to speak about this wonderful thought of a special divine ownership, what it rests upon, and what it involves."

What, in effect, is that admirable introduction? What but a thoughtful, reverent, obedient study of the texts, conducted with a view to learn — or rather to put hearers in the way of learning, exactly as the preacher himself had previously learned — the true, precise, deep meaning of these fragments of the Word of God? There is thought, to be sure, but it is submitted, obedient thought, not thought setting out, pioneer-like, to explore a path of its own, but thought wholly directed to directing itself, without the shadow of turning, in the right line of God's thought.

How much more fruitful it is intellectually (and it is more fruitful morally, in at least an equal degree) thus to make one's self an empty vessel to be filled from God's Word, than it is to empty a vessel found in God's Word to fill it from one's self, this, the volumes of Dr. McLaren's sermons impressively show. A text of Scripture used as Dr. McLaren uses his texts no more hampers and embarrasses preaching, than attachment to the ground hampers and hinders the flight of a kite in the air. The attachment to the ground is a necessary condition to the kite of its rising and staying aloft. So the text, to every preacher who will submit to be bound by it, becomes a condition of stimulated, directed, and unexhausted productiveness. The case is one in which service is liberty. You are free in proportion as you are obedient. Dr. McLaren's example teaches the intellectual, not less than the moral, advantage to the preacher of vigilant, unbribable fidelity to his text.

It may be useful to point out, in passing, that Dr. McLaren's title for the sermon just quoted from, "God's True Treasure in Man," is not ideally felicitous. It involves an ambiguity. It quite as naturally seems to announce that the preacher will undertake to show what it is in man that constitutes God's true treasure, as it does that the preacher will undertake to show that man constitutes God's true treasure. "God's True Treasure Found in Man," is a form of expression that would go far toward removing the undesirable ambiguity. It will not, by the way, be mere captiousness to

express some surprise that Dr. McLaren allowed himself to quote the inexact rendering of the "authorized" version: "Ye shall be unto me a peculiar treasure above all *people*," without correcting the last word to "*peoples*."

The second feature of Dr. McLaren's habitual method is a logical, inseparable sequel of the first. As he loyally submits himself, mind and heart, to God's teaching in the Scripture to be preached from, so he actively exerts himself, mind and heart, to know exactly what that teaching is. He never indolently or carelessly assumes that the apparent meaning is the real meaning of the language. He goes to the original Hebrew or Greek of the passage in the best existing recension of text, and, in the light of independent investigation, corrected by comparison of the most competent exegetical authorities, decides conscientiously what God meant in these words to say. This same care is observable almost omnipresent throughout Dr. McLaren's discourse. If he cites Scripture, even incidentally, in the progress of a sermon, you may count it in the highest degree probable that his citation will be made in the true, and not in the merely obvious, sense of that Scripture. There is, I should be inclined to conjecture, in Dr. McLaren's preaching — let the estimate be made proportionately to the whole volume of preaching in each case presented to the public — a greater amount of sound exegesis than would be found in the preaching of any other preacher whatever. There have been famous preachers — President Dwight, Dr. N. W. Taylor, Saurin in his day, were such — whose course of preaching constituted a sort of body of divinity. A body of exegesis rather, Dr. McLaren's preaching would be found to supply — applied exegesis, the very ideal of legitimate preaching. Generally, in fact almost invariably, Dr. McLaren preaches from short texts, but he is, in the best sense of the adjective, an expository preacher. I doubt if ever any preacher has more rarely used what I have been in the habit of calling "homiletic license" in the handling of Scripture. The result is that it would be as safe to consult Dr. McLaren, in a

sermon of his, for the just interpretation of a Scripture cited, as it would be to consult for the same purpose almost any other man in a commentary. This is as it should be. Dr. McLaren here too is an example and a model to be most heartily commended to preachers.

A third feature of Dr. McLaren's method is the exercise of great care on his part to cast the teaching of his text into the best possible fresh mold of expression exactly answering to his own individual conception of what that teaching is. His effort here aims not at being ingenious, but at being just — not at modifying the meaning of his text into something other than itself, something more serviceable for his own immediate purpose (which shall at the same time, of course, be useful and true); not at this, but at making his fresh form of statement square exquisitely with the ascertained exact sense of his text.

An example or two of what I now mean. Dr. McLaren is treating the text, "And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure." "Put into its general form, the thought," he says, "is just this: If you expect, and expecting, hope to be like Jesus Christ yonder, you will be trying your best to be like Him here." (Here again, by the way, the title of the sermon is open to criticism. Dr. McLaren says justly: "It is not the mere purifying influence of hope that is talked about, but it is the specific influence of this one hope, the hope of ultimate assimilation to Christ leading to strenuous efforts, each a partial resemblance of Him, here and now." And yet he entitles his sermon, "The Purifying Influence of Hope." "The Hope of Christlikeness a Motive to Self-Purifying," would more exactly express the idea of the sermon.)

A second example. The text now is: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Having instructively corrected the foregoing form of his text in accordance with the Revised Version, he says:

"I wish to look with you at the three things that come plainly out of these words. First, that principle that if men are clean it is because they are cleansed; 'Blessed are they that wash their robes.' Secondly, It is the cleansed who have unrestrained access to the source of life. And lastly, It is the cleansed that pass into the society of the city."

In the last foregoing example Dr. McLaren, it will be observed, has blended two things in one, namely, the restating in his own words of the teaching of his text, and the "partition" of his sermon; for he immediately adds: "Now let me deal with these three things," which accordingly he at once proceeds to do.

Labor like that which I have thus exhibited Dr. McLaren as exemplifying — labor both of thought and of expression, on the preacher's part — is of the highest practical value in two different ways; ways different, but reciprocally related to each other. In the first place, the labor reacts upon the preacher himself to make him thorough and faithful in rightly understanding his text; and, in the second place, it enables him effectively to convey his result to the mind of his hearer. I cannot state this point too strongly. There is no mental exercise whatever more profitable to a public oral teacher than exercise in framing several accurately equivalent alternative forms of expression for a given thought. The profit of this exercise is carried to its height when the thought is one supplied from a source (like the Bible) the authority of which is accepted as ultimate, and so supplied, too, in a first form of expression accepted as infallibly true to the thought. Never was made by preacher mistake more sterilizing to his mind — to say nothing of evil effect on his conscience — than the mistake of regarding the use of the text in general as a mere form or convention of the pulpit, and thus of treating a given text in particular as a mere bit of quotation, a motto, more or less fit, prefixed to his sermon.

The somewhat extended extract first made from Dr. McLaren, which I called his "introduction" to a certain

sermon, consisted really of two parts, the first of which only is the introduction proper. The reader is invited to look back at it. The proper introduction ends with the end of the third paragraph. With the beginning of the fourth paragraph, "Therefore there are," begins what technically, in the language of some writers on rhetoric, would be called the "partition." In this fourth paragraph the preacher "partitions," or divides into parts, his discourse. The parts or divisions are not so much made by the preacher as happily found by him already existing in his two texts. The dividing heads consist severally of the three several ideas which, in examining his two texts for their teaching, he discovered those texts to contain. Compare the three "parts" thus found and put into statement of his own by the preacher, and you will see with what exactness, in this case, too, his free individual formulas of expression resume the ideas of the Scriptures he is treating.

It deserves to be noted as a fourth feature of Dr. McLaren's method that, in immediate sequel to his introduction, he divides or partitions his discourse after the manner just shown. Sometimes he partitions twice, that is, in two different forms of words immediately succeeding one another. He does this, and with excellent effect, in the instance to which I just now invited the reader to revert. The duplicated partition cannot, however, be called a prevailing, though it is certainly a frequent, practice with Dr. McLaren. Indeed, the "partition," that is, the preliminary and preparatory announcement of the leading thoughts of the sermon in their order, is not always made even once, with altogether the formal distinctness exemplified in the last instance foregoing. In the complementary sermon to the one from which that instance was drawn, namely, in the sermon entitled, "Man's True Treasure in God," occurs an example of obscurer partition. Here, from the text, Psalm xvi:5, 6, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly herit-

age," the preacher, with the felicity of homiletic genius guided by homiletic conscience, derives these three ideas which furnish his three heads of discourse: I. "All true religion has its very heart in deliberately choosing God as my supreme good"; II. "This possession is as sure as God can make it"; III. "He who thus elects to find his treasure and delight in God is satisfied with his choice." (Again, let readers studiously note how well these three points restate the substance and essence of the text). The heads of discourse thus brought here into assemblage are not, by the preacher himself, announced together beforehand, in an express partition foreshadowing the order of treatment proposed. They are reserved by him to be announced apart, one by one, as each successively is reached in the progress of the sermon.

The better *rule* undoubtedly is, not only to make the partition, but to make it sufficiently formal to be unmistakably distinct. Dr. McLaren probably admits exceptions for the sake of avoiding excessive monotony; which fault, however, he generally, and wisely, avoids by varying the partition in form, rather than by either making it obscure or dispensing with it altogether. His practice seems to me very happily to hit the golden mean between negligence and over-formality. His later practice, especially, I have now in mind, for I seem to observe that he tends of late to increase his care in what may be termed the technics of the sermon. In fact, Dr. McLaren presents a remarkable instance of unrelaxed fidelity in work long maintained without break in the face of that twofold temptation to ministers, so apt to be fatal, namely, the lethargy of added years and the satisfaction of desire for fame. He not only does not deteriorate in the quality of his product — he actually improves. One may judge him very fairly in comparison with himself, for he now publishes his sermons weekly in an English Baptist newspaper, "The Freeman," which is credibly said promptly to have doubled its subscription list after becoming the authorized medium of such publication.

It is a testimony to Dr. McLaren's own sense of the even quality of his work, that to one seeking from him an expression of author's preference for some particular sermon or sermons of his, he had nothing to say except, modestly, with the confidence of a man conscious of always doing his best, that he was willing to be judged by what he currently did from week to week. Such confidence and such willingness on his part were safe,— as safe for his good name, as they were indicative of his good conscience. If there has been, since his earlier volumes, any decline in boldness and brilliancy of thought and of style, this has been fully compensated by advance in sobriety, solidity, fidelity to Scripture, and strict adaptedness, both in matter and in form, to the needs of hearers. The present writer, by the way, were he asked to give his own choice of best among Dr. McLaren's sermons, would doubtfully name the one entitled "Witnesses of the Resurrection," as perhaps eminent above all the rest alike for value in doctrine and for eloquence in exposition. In this sermon the preacher does what is not usual with him — he heats his didactics white-hot in the fire of passion. I feel almost that it would be a truer figure to say, he beats his didactics white-hot on the anvil of thought. For Dr. McLaren's intensity — and intensity is, after clearness, perhaps the chief note of his preaching, whether as regards the composition or as regards the delivery — Dr. McLaren's intensity is an intensity rather of thought than of feeling. There is glow, but it is not so much of the heart as of the mind. Even the sermon just now mentioned on the resurrection of Jesus, which has almost the effect of passion, seems on careful discrimination to be passionately thought, more than passionately felt. But I am forestalling myself.

In connection and collation with the sermon named above, might be read and pondered to advantage the sermon, an Easter sermon, which stands first in the collective volume entitled "A Year's Ministry. Second Series." That volume contains also another sermon so signally, so eminently,

good that I was constrained to say, "doubtfully," when I named "Witnesses of the Resurrection" as perhaps Dr. McLaren's most felicitous single achievement. The sermon I now allude to is the one entitled, "The Love that Calls Us Sons." In this sermon, Dr. McLaren points out, with fine insight and fidelity of scholarship, that the word "that" in the text, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be called sons of God"—ought to be replaced with "in order that"—since the Divine love bestowed is bestowed for a purpose, the purpose of making us Sons of God. (In accordance with this exegesis, would the title of the sermon be more nicely exact, if it should read, "The Love That Would Call Us Sons?")

For the sake of the instructive commentary on Scripture which the comparison and contrast will afford, I ask readers to set the following extract from the sermon now in question, alongside of those parallel passages in Phillips Brooks's teaching, which were quoted and criticised in preceding pages:

"And there is a deeper and solemner word still in the context. John thinks that men (within the range of light and revelation, at all events) are divided into two families—'the children of God and the children of the devil.' There are two families amongst men.

"Thank God! the prodigal son, in his rags amongst the swine, and lying by the swine-troughs in his filth and his husks, and his fever, is a son. No doubt about that. He has these three elements and marks of sonship that no man ever gets rid of: he is of a Divine origin, he has a Divine likeness in that he has got mind, and will, spirit, and he is the object of a Divine love.

"The doctrine of the New Testament about the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of man does not in the slightest degree interfere with these three great truths, that all men, tho the features of the common humanity may be almost battered out of recognition in them, are all children of God because He made them; that they are children of God because still there lives in them something of the likeness of the creative Father; and, blessed be His name! that they are all children of God because He loves, and provides, and cares for everyone of them.

"All that is blessedly and eternally true, but it is also true that there is a higher relation than that to which the name 'children of God' is *more accurately given, and to which in the New Testament that name is confined.* [Italics here are the present writer's.] If you ask what that relation is, let me quote to you three passages in this Epistle, which will answer the question:

"'Whoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, that is the first; 'Everyone that doeth righteousness is born, of God,' that is the second; 'Everyone that loveth is born of God,' that is the third. Or, to put them all into one expression which holds them all, in the great words of his prologue in the first chapter of John's Gospel you find this: 'To as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God.'"

There is, as I believe, no difference of fundamental doctrine between Bishop Brooks and Dr. McLaren, but Dr. McLaren, in his more careful way, guards better the largeness and liberality of the views which he holds in common with Bishop Brooks. He expressly says: "There are two families among men"—"the children of God and the children of the devil."

Let me recapitulate. Dr. McLaren's method — which is the master key to the secret of his power — has been found to include these four elements: 1. Unreserved and unqualified personal submission, on the preacher's part, of mind and of heart to the authority of the Bible, and therefore of the particular text; 2. Exhaustive study of the text to learn its true meaning; 3. Painstaking care to cast this true meaning into a new, original mold of expression, and not seldom into more than one such; 4. Announcement of the heads or divisions under which the discussion will be conducted, or, to speak in the technical language of rhetoric, "partition" of the discourse — the partition being sometimes, for the sake of greater distinctness, duplicated in an alternative form of expression.

It is at least curious that, by actual count of forty-four sermons, taken at random, consecutively, in two different

volumes from Dr. McLaren, it turns out that three in every four of his divisions are threefold. I mention this not to imply fault on the preacher's part. If the tripartite law of division were even more prevalent than it is, it would not follow that the preacher should be blamed. The fair question would always be, Is this given division — triple or other, as the case might be — a good division, the best division? Other things being equal, the threefold division is the best for the sermon. If lines of cleavage can be found that will naturally and satisfactorily lay open a subject in three parts, why so much the better; let the preacher seek no further, but use these and be contented — even though it prove that nine-tenths, instead of three-fourths, of his discourses divide themselves thus threefold. What needs to be guarded against is the natural bent of the mind to move in habitual grooves, and so to move mechanically instead of rationally and logically. There is no absolute safety here but in keeping the mind thoroughly alive and alert. This Dr. McLaren does in a truly remarkable degree. I shall not say that his divisions are always beyond criticism, but certainly they are always made with care, and often with careful felicity.

I am at a loss how to describe what I wish next to set down as a fifth element in Dr. McLaren's homiletic method. I might evade my difficulty by resorting to figurative language, and saying that the preacher performs a kind of incubation on his text, quickening the quick that was dormant and potential within it, and evolving the rich and varied life involved. The result often surprises as much as it delights you, but you feel that it is a perfectly natural result, that it is merely the fruit of a vital process carried on, the offspring of life brought into life-giving contact with life. You say, yes, that was all in the text; why had no one ever found it there before? Ah, it is only to the sculptor, such by the gift of God, that the statue imprisoned from creation in the quarry, cries out, "Here I am, make haste to deliver me;" and it is only to the preacher, such by genius and by

habit, that the sermon cries out of the text, "Here I am, come take me and give me to the world."

That which I have spoken of under the parable of "incubation" is, of course, simply thought, reflection. Dr. McLaren thinks on his text. Success here is largely a question of mere mental patience. Such patience, however, can never be *mere* mental patience. There must be a moral basis to mental virtue of this sort. The mind can, because the conscience says it should, and because the will says it shall. I have a letter from Dr. McLaren written to me under circumstances that make it not improper for me thus to quote from it, in which he says:

"I have never been able to write what was meant to be said, and content myself with getting subject and outline into my head and heart, getting these down on paper much abbreviated, and letting the moment do the rest. So my 'method of work' is very much to sit with my hands in my pockets, and stare at the back of Meyer's Commentaries, which happen to stand opposite to me."

Even that is written in the manner of a man instinctively and habitually impatient of the pen. Evidently Dr. McLaren has schooled himself to use, as his first and chief organ for expression of thought, not the pen but the tongue. It is wonderful that he has nevertheless been able to exact from himself so much genuine thinking. His success is due, I believe, principally to his making his text a fixed central point of regard. This has concentrated his mind, brought his mind to a focus, saved it from dispersing itself over too wide a surface. Let a preacher once resolve fixedly that he will find his sermon, all of it, within the bounds of his text, and it is lettle less than marvelous how fruitful his text will prove itself to be. This Dr. McLaren seems to have done. Thus is accounted for the style of introduction prevailing throughout his sermons. He does not find it necessary to bring his introduction from far. He never begins remotely, by saying, for instance: "There hangs on one of the walls

of the Louvre in Paris a picture," etc., etc.; "It is a remark of Goethe that," etc., etc. Such introductions often do unintended dishonor to the Word of God by impliedly saying, "The bare Scripture is uninteresting; I must import from elsewhere an interest which otherwise my sermon would lack." Dr. McLaren makes his text itself yield him his introduction. His introductions, accordingly, are real introductions, varying constantly with the varied themes introduced. You could seldom or never transfer an introduction of his from one sermon to another. All which is here said only to bring out strongly that fifth element in Dr. McLaren's homiletic method, namely, his habit of long, patient, brooding thought centered on his text.

We may now regard our analysis of method in Dr. McLaren as ended, if not as complete. There needs that something be said of the native gifts and the acquired accomplishments of the man who puts this method so effectively at work.

Dr. McLaren is a singularly sane mind. The personal equation in him, to be allowed for when you seek to appraise exactly the value and trustworthiness of his intellectual results, is very small. He views things in a dry light. There is almost no refraction, distortion, exaggeration, disproportion, to his view. He seldom overstates a point. Such moderation gives what he says great weight. His hearer or reader is not obliged to apply an ever-uncertain coefficient of reduction and correction to find the probable real value of meaning intended to be conveyed. This law of just statement it would be strange indeed if he did not now and then violate. He does so when, for example, he says: "Absolute possession of others is only possible at the price of absolute surrender to them. No human heart ever gave itself away unless it was convinced that the heart to which it gave itself had given itself to it." The first of these two sentences shows that in the second sentence the author's meaning was, "convinced" *in accordance with fact.* Now look sharply at that second sentence, and you will observe

that therein the preacher, in making his statement overstrong, has really destroyed his statement altogether. It is a curious case of unconscious suicide in expression, due simply to the author's stretching his statement beyond what was really his own thought. But Dr. McLaren's thought itself here is very doubtfully sound. Or are there, then, no instances of absolute self-surrender, in love felt to be unrequited? And what would Dr. McLaren do with such cases as those of Napoleon's soldiers, who, thousands of them, gave themselves joyfully up, even to death, for their emperor without the smallest return of reciprocal affection (real or probably even imagined) from him to them?

Intellect, pure intellect, I think, prevails in Dr. McLaren both over the imaginative and over the emotional in him. The comparative defect of passion keeps him steadily a teacher, or at least prevents him from being distinctively and eminently an orator. This, and the comparative defect of imagination, disqualify him for producing sermons justly to be pronounced great — disqualify him even for rising to genuine greatness, majesty, sublimity, in occasional passages. You are never, with Dr. McLaren, "borne like a bubble onward" on the breast of an ocean of eloquence. The land is always in sight on either side. It is only a river on which you are embarked — a strong river, a deep river, but never sea-like, never such as the Amazon at its mouth.

To deny to Dr. McLaren a great gift of imagination will seem to some a strange error of judgment on the part of the critic. I know that there has been a considerable volume published under the title, "Pictures and Emblems," composed exclusively of extracts from Dr. McLaren's sermons — extracts of passages in which the preacher had illuminated his preaching with illustration by description or by comparison. Vividly brilliant passages often they are, these extracts, almost always apt to their legitimate purpose in the sermon, and of true teaching power. They show their author to be a man of lively fancy, quick to discern re-

semblances in things, and to be, moreover, a master in the art of using words. Fine gifts I thus indicate, which Dr. McLaren possesses in ample measure, and nobly has he used them. But such gifts are not quite what constitutes high imagination in their possessor. If I have seemed here to be diminishing the merit of this eminent preacher, to do so has not been my intention. I most sincerely think that Dr. McLaren is better than a great preacher, or rather — for great preacher he certainly is, a very great preacher, even among the few greatest — better, I mean, than a preacher of great sermons; he is an inexhaustibly productive preacher of good sermons, useful sermons, sermons that make a powerful impression, and make it chiefly not for the preacher, but for the truth preached.

These critical papers are planned to be just, and to be just in balancing praise with blame. I feel bound, accordingly, to point out that in instances, rare indeed, Dr. McLaren's illustrations fail to be effective. Examples:

"The deepest rest and the highest activity coincide. . . . The wheel that goes round in swiftest rotation seems to be standing still."

The word "*seems*" here, which had to be introduced, shows that the illustration only *seemed* to illustrate. Again — this time from a sermon on the Lord's Supper:

"Altho the differences are infinite in regard of the sacredness of the person and the thing to be remembered, shall I shock any of you if I say that I know no difference in kind between the bread and the wine that is ["are"?] for a memorial of Christ's dying love, and the handkerchief dipped in blood, sent from the scaffold by a dying king, with the one message:—'Remember!' 'Do this for a memorial of me!'"

The careful guardian clause in preface hardly saves the foregoing illustration from producing some effect of that "shock" which is deprecated.

Once more. The text is, "Surely every man walketh in

a vain show," which the exegete preacher finds to mean, "Surely every man walketh in a shadow;" that is, as a shadow. The preacher asks:

"Did you ever stand upon the shore on some day of that 'uncertain weather, when gloom and glory meet together,' and notice how swiftly there went, racing over miles of billows, a darkening that quenched all the play of color in the waves, as if all suddenly the angel of the waters had spread his broad wings between sun and sea, and then how, in another moment, as swiftly it flits away, and with a burst the light blazes out again, and leagues of ocean flash into green and violet and blue. So fleeting, so utterly perishable, are our lives for all their seeming solid permanency."

Brilliant description that, of a scene and a movement that had been looked on by the describer with a poet's eye. You read it and you see again the scudding shadow fleet over the sea on the wings of the wind — the blackening and the brightening of the waters both you see. You see it all but too vividly. You are dazzled for the moment from seeing anything else. The brilliancy and circumstance of the description prevail over the purpose which the description was introduced to serve. What is admirable in itself becomes the reverse of admirable in its relation.

But enough of exception. The rule is that Dr. McLaren makes his fancy as faithful a servitress, as she is an efficacious, of his reason and his will.

It has already been made sufficiently clear that this great preacher has not failed to equip himself with acquirements answering to the gifts with which a bountiful nature had equipped him. His culture is nearly as strong a mark on his sermons as is his homiletic genius. He has manifestly been an affectionate student of poetry, and of the best poetry. Inwoven with the texture of his discourse, not simply embroidered upon it, are frequent flowers of verse culled with a choice hand from out the fairest gardens of the Muses. Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton in especial, and in especial

Wordsworth and Tennyson, have become "portion and parcel" of his intellectual life. He furnishes an excellent example of the purifying and elevating influence on the orator of habitual familiar communion with the poets. The conception, the diction, the syntax, are each and all of them insensibly thus ennobled. Insensibly, I say; but I mean only that the process is insensible at the moment to the worker of the process. The result is sensible enough to hearer and reader, whether or not these concern themselves to trace it to its source. The influence from poets of which I now speak is especially to be noted in certain places of Dr. McLaren's discourse, in which there is no outright acknowledged quotation of the poet's words. For example, contrasting "the region where dwells the divine nature" and "the various phases of the fleeting moments which we call past, present and future," he says: "These are but the lower layer of clouds which drive before the wind, and *melt from shape to shape*." How evidently both conception and expression here are molded by the silent influence of that magnificently imaginative description in Tennyson of the geologic changes going forward so slowly as to be invisible about us, but in the poet's vision seen swift and fluent like the shifting scenery of the skies:

> The hill are shadows, and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stands;
> They melt like mist, the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

Likeness to Christ, at last — no longer blurred, no longer hidden in believers' hearts — "shall flame in their foreheads," Dr. McLaren says. He does not quote, but he had, of course, more or less consciously in mind, Milton's starry line,

> "Flames in the forehead of the morning sky."

Still another example is found where Dr. McLaren says, "All things take a soberer coloring to the eye that has been

accustomed to look, however dimly, upon God." Compare Wordsworth's

> "The clouds that gather round the setting sun
> Do take a sober coloring from an eye
> That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality."

One of Dr. McLaren's titles, that to the sermon on the text containing these words, "Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven," is a poetically quoted line of poetry, "The Bridal of the Earth and Sky." Mere adjectives, as "crimson-tipped," "jewels five-words-long," or even not so long, *e. g.:* "solemn troops and sweet societies," "most ancient heavens," "appareled in celestial light," "visited all night by troops of stars," "light of setting suns," "birds of tempest-loving kind," "birds of peace sit brooding on the charmed wave," "a sunshine in a shady place." Such gatherings from the poets, frequent, but not over-frequent, on Dr. McLaren's page, have their charm to the imagination. They seem to heighten the value of the setting in which they occur, where also sometimes they themselves, in turn, seem to have their value heightened — such is the unerring taste with which the citations are fitly made. Seldom is a citation of Dr. McLaren's other than true to the text of his original; the last two, however, of the foregoing examples offer exceptions. Milton wrote "birds of *calm*," instead of "birds of *peace*," and Spenser sang of Una that, on a particular occasion, she made "a sunshine in *the* shady place" where she then was.

Dr. McLaren's English is fresh, racy, idiomatic, as well as, in general, correct, tasteful, and scholarly. As in duty bound, so to do one person's part in keeping up the standard, I note again a few exceptions. "Diagnose" (the barbarous medical term) is a word which I venture to "prognose" will not soon be admitted to good literary society even on the strength of an influential introduction like Dr. McLaren's.

"Without knowing *what a big thing* they were doing," reads strangely out of place in this author's chaste pages. "Durst," used in the present tense for "dare"; "amongst" the *whole* of you," for "among you all"; the tangle of *as's* (and the dreadful correlation of "equally" with "as") in a sentence declaring that Paul looked upon the "miraculous appearing [to himself on the way to Damascus] of Jesus Christ in the heavens *as* being equally available *as* rooting ground for his Christian conviction *as* were," etc. These are examples of negligence which, because such negligence is so rare with Dr. McLaren, serve only to set off by contrast the astonishing correctness, purity, and neatness of his style.

Astonishing, I thoughtfully call these attributes in Dr. McLaren's discourse; for it must be remembered that the discourse is, as composition, extemporaneous: unless, indeed, the preacher's own testimony, already quoted, concerning his habits in preparation for the pulpit, be construed to consist with the idea that though he does not *write,* he yet in premeditation *composes,* as Robert Hall did, the greater part of his sermon. But even in that case the result achieved is, in the respects named, nothing less than extraordinary. The present writer has, in one instance, had the opportunity to compare the printed form with the form previously preached of a sermon of Dr. McLaren's; and he can testify that the process of revision for the press leaves the sermon as delivered from the pulpit almost entirely unchanged. Regarded as products of proper extemporization, Dr. McLaren's sermons are, in the aggregate, for logical progress of thought, for density of sententiousness, for freedom from surplusage, for balance of judgment, for prevalent good sense and good taste, for precision of statement, for purity of diction, for various excellence in style — his sermons are, I say, for these virtues, I dare not affirm without parallel, but so near to that mark that I, for my part, if a parallel were demanded, should have to remain silent. But even such ascription does not make of Dr. McLaren a rhetorician like Dr. Storrs, or an orator like Mr. Beecher.

Of Dr. McLaren's manner in delivery, little requires to be said beyond this, that, as might be looked for in so thoroughly genuine a man, the manner admirably answers to the matter. It makes the matter very effective. One thing it lacks, which also the matter itself lacks, and that is the intermingling of tenderness and pathos. What Dr. McLaren says is not seldom tenderly thought, but it somehow fails to be tenderly felt, whether in the writing or in the speaking. Dr. McLaren sincerely mourns, but he does not uncontrollably weep, over Jerusalem. One wishes at times that this clear-headed, true-hearted, nay, gentle-hearted man could remember, *Sunt lachrymæ rerum.* There should now and again be tears in the ink with which the preacher writes, and tears in the tones with which the preacher speaks. But what business have I, in estimating Dr. McLaren, to require the thing that is not? Let me rather give myself up to enjoying and commending the still more precious things that are.

On the point of Dr. McLaren's work as done in the pulpit, I shall not perhaps do better than to quote from myself what I lately wrote, descriptive of an occasion on which I heard the great Manchester preacher:

"More thoroughly, more intensely vital discourse, I think I have never heard than I heard last Sunday from Dr. McLaren's lips. The speaker himself, in the act of speaking, seemed to tingle to his very finger's tips with costly electric vitality. His voice was pitched sympathetically in a high key, a key in fact too high; the tension of it produced the effect of having grown to be habitual. At first it was slightly unpleasant to the unaccustomed hearer, as implying laborious strain on the speaker's part; but the harmony between the thought and the utterance soon obliterated the sense of this, and you came at length to feel that such utterance was required by such thought. Intensity, eagerness, unintermitted insistence, unrelaxing grasp of his hearer, mind and conscience and will — this is the predominant note

of Dr. McLaren's delivery. His voice has a quality in it that will not let you go, and even his fingers curl tensely and prehensively, as if to seize you and hold you fast. It might almost be said, too, that like Coleridge's Mariner, he holds you with his glittering eye; for although he may not fairly look at you so much as once in the whole course of his sermon, yet his eyes, fixed forward, as if on his thought instead of on his audience, 'glitter,' and they fascinate you. This is from the very start. There is a pause after the speaker rises before he actually begins to speak; and when he does begin it is in a seer-like manner, and with a far-forward-looking eye which makes you instinctively think of Pope's line:

'Rapt into future worlds the bard began.'

You do not so much feel yourself personally addressed in the sermon as admitted to hear a man think aloud powerfully on a subject on which you are perforce deeply, vitally concerned. The aspect of the audience is, universally and continuously, well-nigh as eager and intent as that of the speaker. The silence is half as eloquent as the sound."

Taken for all in all — quantity too as well as quality being admitted to affect the comparative estimate — the collective series of Dr. McLaren's printed sermons may, I think, safely be said to equal, if it does not exceed, in present practical value for ministers, any single similar body of production existing in any literature, ancient or modern. And it gives you a joyful sense of added wealth in prospect to consider that the unbroken, though ripe, age of the preacher, together with his remarkable habit of steadily improving upon himself, seems to promise us, year by year, for yet many and many a year to come, "A Year's Ministry"— in volume after volume so named, of sermons growing more helpful rather than less, from the pen — or shall we say tongue?— of Alexander McLaren.

VI

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE aim at independence — I trust not at eccentricity — that animated the author both in conceiving and in executing his task in this series of criticisms, finds in the one example of critical treatment now about to be furnished its sufficient illustration. As to John Henry Newman, in the face of well-nigh universal convention among ostensible critical authorities, pronouncing him a consummate master of style, the present critic thought he saw reason, thought he could show reason, for not according to that eminent writer such unqualified high praise.

It may interest readers who know what truly noble English James Martineau could write, to learn that, through a happy chance, I found myself supported in this dissenting estimate of mine by the concurrence, partial at least, of that great writer. In the course of an hour's conversation had by me with Dr. Martineau at his house, where I had the privilege of calling, at his own invitation (unsought, but of course very gladly responded to), the name of John Henry Newman, then just deceased, came up between us by Dr. Martineau's mention of him, which gave me occasion to remark incidentally that in my opinion F. W. Newman had the command of a better English style than had his more famous brother, the Cardinal; to which Dr. Martineau assented heartily, saying, with some surprise expressed in his manner, "I am glad to hear you say that; I think so, too"— thereupon producing a letter just received by him from the surviving brother, whence it appeared that, as was not unnatural in the case of kindred so wide apart in religious views, there

unhappily existed a strained relation between the two brothers.

I may add that the present criticism of Cardinal Newman attracted attention enough in England to be made the subject of remark in a London periodical, whose editor seemed to be left in a suspense of surprise at the unusual tenor of it — surprise and indetermination both at once — for he cautiously refrained from either concurring or dissenting.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

The place of Cardinal Newman among recent masters in the eloquence of the pulpit, is peculiar — is, in fact, unique. In him we encounter a man who, besides being a preacher of illustrious name, presumptively claims, that is, claims by wide consent of imposing opinion, the rank of a permanent classic — a permanent classic of the highest order — in English literature. This state of the case with the present subject will justify, if it does not demand, a correspondingly differenced course of critical discussion.

John Henry Newman, during one prolonged stadium of his career, suffered under an undeserved adversity of public judgment as to his character and conduct. But this wrong against him was amply righted at length, perhaps more, even, than amply righted; and, in the total retrospect of his life, he must be pronounced a select and singular favorite of fame and of fortune. He died recently in an odor of sanctity that filled the English-speaking world.

For a quarter of a century before his death, it had been the habit and tradition of enlightened critical essayists and of the higher periodical press to praise his style as the final consummation of everything noble and beautiful in expression that contemporary English literature had to show; and, when at last his death made it seem necessary that appreciation should pass into eulogy, then there were not wanting those who would have it that John Henry Newman's prose was, upon the whole, the very best writing, of whatever time, in the English language.

In the conscious presence of such a universal fondness, grown a fashion, for eulogizing, to criticise calmly, disinterestedly, without prepossession on the one hand, and, on the other hand, equally without opposition unjustly ex-

aggerated to make the balance just, will certainly be a little difficult; but it is that, precisely that, which must here be attempted. For it is of the very idea of really profitable criticism that it shall be, as far as possible, absolutely uninfluenced, either on the one side or on the other, by prescription or by convention, and shall pronounce, in praise or in blame, not according to probable public expectation, but only according to the perceived and perceivable — and I may properly add, the demonstrable — reason existing in the particular case concerned.

Cardinal Newman first attracted public attention as a preacher. His later fame was that of a writer; but his sermons still constitute a very important part of his published production. These, in fact, may be considered to have attained a distinction rare for sermons, that of challenging for themselves a commanding place in standard English literature. Exceptional double fame like this, undeniably Newman's, makes it fit that he, though only by virtue of being an eminent preacher brought within the view of the present series of critical papers, should yet, by exception, be treated here primarily as a literary man.

It is a great satisfaction to the critic constitutionally desirous of concurring rather than of differing, to be able to begin by according at once to this eminent writer, and according in full measure, the supreme literary virtue of thorough-going genuineness in style. Newman's style is the pure and perfect mirror of the man himself. To the critically observant reader, it is a matter of self-evidence that it reflects the writer's thought, his feeling, his temper, his character, without obscuration, without exaggeration, without distortion. His style itself is, in a sense, Newman's true autobiography.

The man thus revealed in Newman's style is a high, clear, brave, loyal, strenuous, intent, unworldly nature, penetrated with religion; but withal a nature narrow, intense, with the intensity proper to narrowness, and having imagination or fancy in such ascendant proportion to reason, or rather in

such a sort, as to constitute it a virtual flaw in the soundness of the judging mind. "In such a sort," I say, and the sort I mean will best perhaps be suggested, if I call it sentimental.

The style that holds a faithful mirror up to such a nature must necessarily have great excellences, but, as I have intimated, the capital excellence of Newman's style consists in its consummate fidelity to what it had to represent, that is, in its genuineness. Of course, in one sense, and that an important sense, every style is, by the unescapable necessity of things, doomed to represent the author who writes in it exactly such as he is. It may be an affected style, but, if so, it only shows the author to be capable of affectation, and not superior to it; it may be a showy style, but then it exhibits the author truly, as one willing to pass for all that he is, and perhaps for something more; it may be an involved style, but then it simply reflects the encumbered and partly ineffectual movement of the author's mind; and so on, through all the possible vices or virtues of literary expression.

Obviously, it is not in this sense that I predicate genuineness, that is, fidelity in expression to the thing to be expressed, of Newman's style, praising it as a literary virtue of the supreme order. Genuineness of the merely inevitable sort just described is not a virtue at all; it is a fate. But Newman's genuineness in style is not a fate; it is a virtue. It springs from a conscious, a resolute, an exercised sincerity in the man. This man will say nothing that he does not think, or feel, or fancy; and that which he thinks, or feels, or fancies, he will not say otherwise than as he thinks, or feels, or fancies it. There is no strain to express things not really present to the writer ready for expression; and no strain to have things present merely in order that he may have somewhat to express. The only effort observable is effort to express truly the actual current content of the writer's mind.

Now how great, how singular, a virtue of style such gen-

uineness is as that which I thus attribute to Newman, is best to be appreciated by comparison and contrast of him in this respect with other good writers.

John Ruskin is one of the most genuine of writers. He is consciously, and intentionally, he is strenuously, genuine. Genuineness is one of his chief notes; of him you cannot say, as you can of Newman, that it is his chief. There is in Ruskin a contention of other aims with the aim to be genuine, which sometimes seriously modifies the final result. For instance, there is an eagerness in him, an ambition, a "a toil and endeavor," that defeats the effect of repose. Newman's perfect singleness of aim produces a harmony, a reconciliation and rest of elements, lacking to Ruskin. Take an example. Ruskin has a famous characteristic passage of imaginative description, on the whole so good that it may be pronounced worthy to serve, as it has been made to serve, the purpose of text-book exemplification of its rhetorical kind,— which yet, on careful scrutiny, proves to contain things, if it be not even itself a thing, hostile to the principle of genuineness — hostile, that is to say, to that very master principle of all art, literary or other, of which Ruskin himself was, his life long, the indefatigable triumphant sworn champion. The passage to which I refer is that noble one in which the writer attempts the difficult double feat of first imagining, and then fixing in words, a vision, as of the bird's eye, sweeping almost at once over a landscape made up from all the latitudes of Europe. It is *vision,* be it remembered, picture to the *eye,* that the attempt on the writer's part in this passage, expressly is to represent. Ruskin says:

"We do not enough conceive for ourselves that variegated mosaic of the world's surface which a bird sees in its migration, that difference between the district of the gentian and of the olive which the stork and the swallow see far off, as they lean upon the sirocco wind. Let us, for a moment, try to raise ourselves even above the level of their flight, and imagine the Mediterranean lying beneath us like an irregular lake, and all its

ancient promontories sleeping in the sun; here and there an angry spot of thunder, a gray stain of storms, moving upon the burning field; and here and there a fixed wreath of white volcano smoke, surrounded by its circle of ashes; but for the most part a great peacefulness of light, Syria and Greece, Italy and Spain, laid like pieces of golden pavement into the sea-blue, chased, as we stoop nearer to them, with bossy beaten-work of mountain chains, and glowing softly with terraced gardens, and flowers heavy with frankincense, mixed among masses of laurel, and orange and plumy palm, that abate with their gray-green shadows the burning of the marble rocks, and of the ledges of porphyry sloping under lucent sand."

I have limited myself to quoting here from this magnificent piece of imaginative description only so much as will serve the present purpose of illustration. The whole passage, truly admirable as it is, might, as I have ventured to intimate, justly be found subject to another critical objection of a character more general and therefore more fatal; but what it is pertinent now to point out is this, that, amid the somewhat distracted syntax of the portion following the words, "but for the most part," we have exhibited to us "Syria and Greece, Italy and Spain," seen so far underneath one that the "mountain chains" merely "chase" their surface, yet "glowing softly with terraced gardens" (under the reduction of sight commanded from aerial altitude such that "mountains" were "chasing," what effect of "terracing" on their slopes could supposably remain to the eye?); "glowing softly" also "with flowers *heavy with frankincense.*" Granted (what, to say the least, is doubtful) that "frankincense," a certain gummy vegetable exudation yielding perfume *when burned,* may properly be used by metonomy for *odor* in general, we still have here, let it be noted, a property appealing to the sense of smell suddenly and disturbingly intruded into an assemblage of images intended exclusively for the sense of sight. The intrusion violates for an instant the harmony of representation, and *perfect* genuineness produces perfect

harmony. Of course I know it may be answered to this critical objection of mine against Ruskin's perfect genuineness that the note, "heavy with frankincense," is to be regarded in its place simply as the superfluous overplay of an excited imagination, like the fine expression, "as they lean upon the sirocco wind." The important difference is that the latter is in keeping, as the former is not. One *sees* the stork and the swallow "leaning" against that wind. But in truth the entire passage from Ruskin, of which my citation is only a small part, is a pretty pure exuberance of the imagination in the text to which it belongs. It does not really serve at all its ostensible purpose; or, if at all, then certainly not so well as a brief unrhetorical statement of the alleged contrast between South and North would have done. In short, it recalls the famous remark about the famous charge at Balaklava, "It is magnificent, but it is not war." For the satisfaction of some fair-minded reader who may feel that I have pushed my criticism of the foregoing passage from Ruskin too far, I think I shall even have to push it now a little farther. "Flowers heavy with frankincense." But, as already pointed out, frankincense is not an odor at all, and if it were, it is not an odor yielded by "flowers." Further, the gum frankincense is not produced anywhere within the bounds of the landscape with which Ruskin here is dealing. Yet again, from the altitude supposed for the observer, no effect of odor would be felt, how "heavy" soever with odor the "flowers" yielding it might be conceived to be. Altogether, the description, verbally splendid as it is, proves, carefully considered, to be distinctly flawed with an element of the not-genuine.

Now Newman has, so far as I know, no passage of writing that could be adduced in parallel of the foregoing passage from Ruskin. That passage is an obvious *tour de force,* a conscious exploit, on Ruskin's part. In such experiments, in such superfluous exercises of power, Newman never indulges. I do not say that he could accomplish feats like that, if he should see fit to try. His taste and his temper

seem to incline him to an Attic economy of display. This is a part of *his* peculiar genuineness. But thus much might with great confidence be hazarded: If Newman should attempt a flight of the imagination like that attempted by Ruskin in the passage quoted from in him, there would hardly be found in the result even any such microscopic flaw of the not-genuine as Ruskin inadvertently admitted into his description. No such "purple patch" of purely imaginative description could probably be found in the whole volume of Newman's production, but a passage of realistic narrative description occurring in his tale entitled "Callista," may be set in contrast. The subject is, "A Visitation"—that is, of locusts. There will be found in it, even where he brings his imagination most freely into play, no lapses from the truth of the reality described. I show an extract:

"They advanced, host after host, for a time wafted on the air, and gradually declining to the earth, while fresh broods were carried over the first, and neared the earth, after a longer flight, in their turn. For twelve miles did they extend from front to rear, and their whizzing and hissing could be heard for six miles on every side of them. The bright sun, though hidden by them, illumined their bodies, and was reflected from their quivering wings; and as they heavily fell earthward they seemed like the innumerable flakes of a yellow-colored snow. And like snow did they descend, a living carpet, or rather pall, upon fields, crops, gardens, copses, groves, orchards, vineyards, olive woods, orangeries, palm plantations, and the deep forests, sparing nothing within their reach, and where there was nothing to devour, lying helpless in drifts, or crawling forward obstinately, as they best might, with the hope of prey. They could spare their hundred thousand soldiers twice or thrice over, and not miss them; their masses filled the bottoms of the ravines and hollow ways, impeding the traveller as he rode forward on his journey, and trampled by thousands under his horse-hoofs. In vain was all this overthrow and waste by the roadside; in vain their loss in river, pool, and watercourse. The poor peasants hastily dug pits and trenches as their enemy came on; in vain they filled them from the wells or with lighted stubble. Heavily and thickly

did the locusts fall: they were lavish of their lives; they choked the flame and the water, which destroyed them the while, and the vast living hostile armament still moved on.

"They moved right on like soldiers in their ranks, stopping at nothing, and straggling for nothing: they carried a broad furrow or wheal all across the country, black and loathsome, while it was as green and smiling on each side of them and in front, as it had been before they came."

No rhetorician is Newman, even in the better sense of that word. In those moments, rare with him, when he condescends to seem a little rhetorical, he will, as it were, indifferently, almost negligently, produce the sort of writing which the following passage exemplifies. He has been describing the start of a movement in the direction of liberalism — to him lamentable; he thus describes the sequel:

"Since that time," he says, "Phaëton has got into the chariot of the sun; we, alas! can only look on and watch him down the steep of heaven. Meanwhile, the lands, which he is passing over, suffer from his driving."

The rhetoric here seems a matter of indifference to the writer; but far from indifferent to him is the thing that the rhetoric expresses. That genuine feeling, however, produced a genuine rhetoric.

The foregoing is from the *"Apologia pro Vita Sua,"* a work of Newman's late middle life, on the whole, the most interesting and the best of his writings. This autobiography, however, it may be remarked, is but very sparingly illuminated with such rhetorical garnishes as that which I have just now shown. "Garnish" indeed that is not; but only a garnished expression of the thought to be expressed. The element of garnish present is strictly subordinate and ancillary, as of right it should be. Newman's main thought — thought in this case deeply touched with feeling — dominated, as in the case of the distinctively rhetorical writer it might fail to do.

Take now another specimen of Newman in his more

imaginative mood — mood more imaginative, and perhaps more imaginative time of life. I quote from a sermon preached in St. Mary's at Oxford, while the preacher was still an Anglican, while therefore he was also still young. The sermon is on the subject of "Angels," altho the title is "The Powers of Nature." Newman thought the "Angels" were of those "Powers." He says:

"I do not pretend to say, that we are told in Scripture what Matter is; but I affirm, that as our souls move our bodies, be our bodies what they may, so there are Spiritual Intelligences which move these wonderful and vast portions of the natural world which seem to be inanimate; and as the gestures, speech, and expressive countenances of our friends around us enable us to hold intercourse with them, so, in the motions of universal Nature, in the interchange of day and night, summer and winter, wind and storm, fulfilling His word, we are reminded of the blessed and dutiful Angels. . . . Thus, whenever we look abroad, we are reminded of those most gracious and holy Beings, the servants of the Holiest, who deign to minister to the heirs of salvation. *Every breath of air and ray of light and heat, every beautiful prospect, is, as it were, the skirts of their garments, the waving of the robes of those whose faces see God in heaven.*" [Italics my own.]

I quote the foregoing not as an example of fine imaginative writing, tho it is often quoted and admired for such, and not as an example of well-ordered and rhythmical prose, tho it is perhaps fairly enough characteristic of Newman's style at its best; but only by way of illustrating the trait of genuineness in the writer. Fanciful as, to the casual reader, the ideas expressed may seem to be, they are by no means the offspring of mere playful creative fancy on Newman's part. His fancy indeed exercised itself, but in obedience to sentiment. Newman soberly thought what he said. He was simply true to his own individual conception and conviction. In short, he was perfectly genuine. This is John Henry Newman. He was genuine here, as he is genuine everywhere.

So much for what is at once chief, and chiefly admirable, in Newman considered as a writer — his genuineness.

The second trait, as in the man, so in his literary work, to command our attention and our respect, is his solemn earnestness. He not only means what he says, but he *says* what he means. And what he means, he means intensely. This character in him as a writer is branded, an ineffaceable, an unescapable, legend all over his work; nay, it is inseparably waterlined — more, incorporate, in it.

Next, or perhaps simultaneous, and indistinguishably one in impression with both his genuineness and his earnestness, is Newman's quality of unworldliness. But this quality in him deserves a less negative name. Let us call it spiritual-mindedness. A man more worthy, seeming more worthy, of the praise implied in this attribute, I do not know in literature or in history. The detachment, to use that word in its somewhat esoteric religious meaning, the detachment of Newman's mind is really wonderful. It is almost excessive. At least it has the effect to remove him a little too far — for the most vital influence on men in general — from the sphere of ordinary human interests. The *Apologia* derived its exceptional charm for the great public from the fact of its constituting a kind of return, on the writer's part, to a world, the world of his fellow-men in general, long since forsaken, and, as it were, forgotten by him. It exhibited the Roman Catholic priest in the amiable light of a man and an Englishman, of a mortal with red blood in his veins, a man honorably desirous to be thought at least justly of, if not well of, by his fellows.

It was a persuasive, an irresistible, appeal on his own behalf, made in the free and open forum of common human feeling. But even in the *Apologia,* the detachment, the unworldliness, of the writer is a very striking character in the writing. The heat of indignant self-defense at no point forces Newman beyond a momentary, a provisional, putting off of his habitual heavenly-mindedness. He is angry only as one might imagine an angel to be angry. But there is

pregnant enough hint provided of flame that might burn very devouring round about him, if he should cease to hold it in check. As the fact stands, his wrath never exceeds a certain just measure.

What precedes I had already set down, before lighting upon a letter of Newman's lately made public, in which the writer speaks of his own inward emotion in composing his *Apologia*. This letter was called out by the then recent death of Charles Kingsley, that antagonist of his to whose accusations the *Apologia* was a reply. Newman says in it: "A casual reader would think my language denoted anger, but it did not." He goes on to explain that he was indignant only in order to obtain a hearing and to be believed. The pure unworldliness of spirit in which Newman began, seems to have become curiously blended at last with the thorough-going Roman Catholic ecclesiastic's absorption in the interests of his hierarchy, and consequent indifference to the world — as the world exists outside of the "Church." Newman's interior serenity, therefore, under attack from the "world," was due, in part uncertain how large, to the insular unconcern of a man whose citizenship was in a different country. This deep unconcern enabled Newman, with equal equanimity, to refuse communication even by speech with his own brother, the free-thinker, Francis W., and to treat blandly assailants whom by exception he thought it worth while to notice at all.

I am led naturally to name next a schooled, well-bred urbanity in manner as characteristic of Newman's literary style. One feels that were that writer less, than in fact he is, under the control of a spiritual mind, he would still be saved from anything like what the French call "brutality" in expression, by the sentiment of self-respect, or by a certain imperturbable rectitude of judgment joined to a vigilantly self-guarding instinct of taste. In short, independent of his unworldliness, and additional to it, the gentleman-like quality is everywhere to be felt, even throughout the strain of energetic controversy, in Newman's style.

Genuineness, earnestness, spiritual-mindedness, urbanity — these qualities are sufficient to confer distinction on any style in which they are present. But evidently they are moral, rather than intellectual or literary, qualities. They belong to the man as man, almost more than they belong to the writer as writer. Still, a man such will inevitably be such a writer. Besides, the qualities named, moral though they themselves be, beget qualities, or tend to beget qualities, that are intellectual or literary. Of the qualities thus begotten in Newman, may be named lucidity and simplicity. Such lucidity and such simplicity as spring from genuineness and earnestness, Newman's style undoubtedly possesses in a high degree.

But — but — now a serious question. That question is, beyond the mark just indicated, how much may justly and wisely be attributed to Newman in the way of lucidity and simplicity? Has he the lucidity and the simplicity of exercised and disciplined art? Critics generally say, or imply, "Yes." Or else they are "very bold" and attribute a lucidity and a simplicity far transcending art, a lucidity and a simplicity, therefore, able to dispense with art. I cannot agree.

First, whatever merit of lucidity is fairly Newman's must be reconciled with such sentences as the following — and, sentences approximately such are not very infrequent in his works (I call attention with italics):

"*They* [the "originators" of the Anglo-Catholic party] put forth views and principles for *their* own sake, because *they* were true, as if *they* were obliged to say *them* ["say" "views and principles"?] and, as *they* might be *themselves* surprised at *their* [own?] earnestness in uttering *them, they* had as great cause to be surprised at the success which attended *their* propagation [dissemination? promulgation?]."

(The "success" in question could hardly be said to "attend" the "propagation" of the "views and principles" alluded to; the "propagation," if that result occurred, would

itself constitute the "success.") Surely, writing ideally lucid does not deal in a distraction of pronouns like that exemplified in the sentence just quoted. The quotation is from the *Apologia,* p. 76.

Again, whatever simplicity may justly be credited to Newman's style must be reconciled with confused sentences like the following, not uncharacteristic of this author's ordinary manner; the autobiographer quotes from himself (*Apologia,* pp. 72, 73). He says:

"I speak in the Preface of 'offering suggestions toward a work, *which* must be uppermost in the mind of every true son of the English Church at this day,—the consolidation of a theological system, *which,* built upon those formularies, to *which* all clergymen are bound, may tend to inform, persuade, and absorb into itself religious minds, *which* hitherto have fancied, that, on the peculiar Protestant questions, they were seriously opposed to each other.'"

To me that sentence does not seem either very simple or very lucid. No style, in fact, can justly be pronounced exceptionally simple, and no style is likely to be exceptionally lucid, that tends to multiply relative constructions, especially to multiply relative constructions in a manner to make them depend in succession, one upon another. I cannot help thinking that a little labor of art would have been well bestowed by the writer of the sentences last quoted in disentangling them for the readier comprehension of the reader. As an incidental point of diction, is it the felicity of a true master of style to speak of a "theological system" as "*absorbing* minds into itself"? And now, having spoken of diction, I may as well here at once say that Newman occasionally adulterates the rhetorical purity of his language with words and usages hardly better than newspaperish. Sometimes these will be unnecessarily high-sounding or pedantic; sometimes, on the other hand, over-familiar, to the verge of vulgarity. *Clientela* (*Apologia,* p. 15), "catachrestically" (*Ib.,* p. 161), "palmary instance," "dom-

inant circumambient 'Popery'" (*Ib.*, p. 79), "comprecation," are examples of the former; "uppish," "anyhow," "progressed," "equally as well as," "forming schemes what they will do," are examples of the latter. It may further be mentioned that expressions which have been stigmatized as "American" meet one's eye, redeemed to English respectability on Newman's page, *e. g.*, "go ahead," "[preachers'] respective *antecedents*," "*advocated* conclusions." French words, Latin words, and even Greek words occur not seldom.

It would be easy to adduce, in overwhelming number, examples of sins against lucidity and simplicity in Newman's style. But I prefer to say comprehensively (with ample store of instances held in reserve to confirm the judgment) that, in those two capital virtues, at least, of the consummate literary artist, Newman is far from excelling.

Let me now bring forward a sentence (*Apologia*, p. 165), a really good sentence of its kind, that will show Newman, and show him characteristically, at his truly admirable best:

> "The members of this new school looked up to me, as I have said, and did me true kindnesses, and really loved me, and stood by me in trouble, when others went away, and for all this I was grateful; nay, many of them were in trouble themselves, and in the same boat with me, and that was a further cause of sympathy between us; and hence it was, when the new school came on in force, and into collision with the old, I had not the heart, any more than the power, to repel them; I was in great perplexity, and hardly knew where I stood; I took their part; and, when I wanted to be in peace and silence, I had to speak out, and I incurred the charge of weakness from some men, and of mysteriousness, shuffling, and underhand dealing from the majority."

That is not a vertebrate sentence; vertebrate sentences Newman does not produce. It is an articulate sentence. It does not march. There is no "*quadrupedante putrem sonitu*" effect in it. It advances, but it is rather by sliding than by striding. *Mutatis mutandis*, that sentence might

have lost its way out of one of Plato's pages. It is Greek in its purity of vernacular idiom, in its artless-seeming, perhaps really artless, multiplication of "ands," its easy aggregation of clauses, its unconscious unconcern for structure, its willingness to go on and on to no certain end foreseen, its simple trust to come out safely somewhere, and then in its actually coming out at last in precisely the right place for the emphasis of thought desired.

It is easier to write Greek sentences than it is to write Latin, invertebrate than vertebrate, loose than periodic; easier to write them, but not easier to write them well. To write them well is about the last consummate triumph of literary aptitude schooled to literary art. The danger constantly is that you will let your ease lapse into negligence, that your negligence will escape your attention degenerating from what is noble into what is ignoble. You cannot have your robes flowing and write well in the manner now described. But the effect must be as if your robes were flowing when you produced the effect. All the more reason why you should, in point of fact, have them tightly cinctured.

It cannot wisely be said that in general the Greek style is better than the Latin. Also, the converse of this cannot wisely be affirmed. Each style has its own peculiar virtues to recommend it. One is better for certain purposes, the other, for certain other purposes. Newman would, in my opinion, have written Greek better if he had written Latin more. His style tends to formlessness; and this tendency practice on his part of writing in periods would have contributed to correct.

Let me illustrate what I mean in ascribing to Newman a tendency to formlessness in style; an ascription which, I admit, is much the same as denying to him the firm possession of style. I give the paragraph (*Apologia*, pp. 165, 166) immediately following the sentence last quoted from Newman. And, by the way, it happens, by a quite unintended felicity of coincidence, that these citations, made primarily for a subordinate purpose, will incidentally present in small

the very substance and marrow of Newman's entire noble self-defense:

"Now I will say here frankly, that this sort of charge [that of "underhand dealing"] is a matter which I cannot properly meet, because I cannot duly realize it. I have never had any suspicion of my own honesty; and, when men say that I was dishonest, I cannot grasp the accusation as a distinct conception, such as it is possible to encounter. If a man said to me, 'On such a day and before such persons you said a thing was white, when it was black,' I understand what is meant well enough, and I can set myself to prove an *alibi* or to explain a mistake; or if a man said to me, 'You tried to gain me over to your party, intending to take me with you to Rome, but you did not succeed,' I can give him the lie, and lay down an assertion of my own as firm and as exact as his, that not from the time that I was first unsettled, did I ever attempt to gain any one over to myself or to my Romanizing opinions, and that it is only his own coxcombical fancy which has bred such a thought in him; but my imagination is at a loss in presence of those vague charges which have commonly been brought against me, charges, which are made up of impressions, and understandings, and inferences, and hearsay, and surmises. Accordingly, I shall not make the attempt, for in doing so, I should be dealing blows in the air; what I shall attempt is to state what I know of myself and what I recollect, and leave to others its application." [In "coxcombical," was there a moment's lapse from urbanity?]

It is a negligence, *not*, as I think, "noble," to say, "This sort of charge is a matter which I cannot properly meet," instead of saying, "This sort of charge is *one*," etc., or, "A charge of this sort I cannot properly meet," for the obvious reason that it is a "charge" and not a "matter" that one "meets" in the way of refutation. "If a man *said* to me . . . I *understand*" (instead of "should understand") is a false concord of moods and tenses. "I understand what is meant well enough," should be, "I [should] understand well enough what was meant." "And I *can* not," etc., should be "And I *could* not," etc. "If a man *said* to

me . . . I *can* give him the lie." This last expression, by the way, is ambiguous, for it might mean, "I *did* succeed," that is, in bringing the man in question over to Rome, instead of meaning (Newman's true thought), "I never tried to do it." "But you did not succeed," was not to Newman's purpose; he ought to have suppressed it. "Charges" cannot properly be said to be "made up of impressions and understandings," etc.; they may be said to be "founded" on such things, or possibly to be "made up *from*" them. "Accordingly, I shall not make the attempt." What "attempt?" There has been no "attempt" spoken of, except the "attempt" to gain converts for Rome; and that "attempt" cannot be meant. Of course, the "attempt" merely suggested (hardly suggested) in the words, "my imagination is at a loss," is what Newman had in mind.

Now it may be said in reply to all this: "Newman was too intent on his main purpose to regard these niceties of expression. And in fact, despite faults committed, he makes his meaning well enough understood. A great aim sincerely sought carries the day over rhetorical and grammatical inadvertences." Most certainly, say I; and, as long as it is the matter only, and not at all the form, in Newman's work that receives the attention, no such objections as these of mine need be made. But when Newman's *style* is praised as it is praised, then there is fair reason for considering whether the praise be deserved.

It is a proof of Newman's writing with a loose girdle that he leaves his participles now and again without syntax, as also that now and again he makes his adverbs or adverbial expressions qualify nouns. Examples of the latter fault: "Speaking of the strangeness *at first sight, in the judgment of the present day*, of some of their principles," etc. (*Apologia*, p. 55); and, "The multitude, whose best estate is that of chastisement, repentance, supplication and absolution, *again and again*." (Sermons, Vol. II., p. 136.) Examples of the former:

"Then, too, it was reported, truly or falsely, how a rising man of brilliant reputation, the present Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. Milman, admired and loved him [Keble], *adding,* that somehow he was strangely unlike any one else." (*Apologia,* p. 17.)

Again:

"*Dying* prematurely, as he [Hurrell Froude] did, in the conflict and transition-state of opinion, his religious views never reached their ultimate conclusion, by the very reason of their multitude and their depth." (*Apologia,* p. 24.)

As touching the last sentence quoted it may, in passing, be remarked that "views" do not tend toward being "concluded." I note thus an instance, in itself unimportant, of a certain lack of felicity in expression which marks Newman's style. He writes obstructedly. Something seems constantly to impede his movement. There is progress all the time; but it is progress accomplished with labor. There is no flow. You encounter awkwardnesses of expression, more or less striking, on almost every page. For example, on the same page with the sentence last quoted you find Newman saying, still of Hurrell Froude:

"He was more than inclined to *believe a large amount of miraculous interference as occurring* in the early and middle ages."

Once more, still on the same page, Newman says:

"I am introducing others into my narrative, not for their own sake, or because I love and have loved them, *so much as because, and so far as,* they have influenced my theological views."

The syntax here, when disentangled, is as follows: "I am introducing others into my narrative not because I love them *so much as so far as* they have influenced my views." This last awkwardness is due to pressure of thought not compelled by the writer to wait the course of orderly utterance.

Many of the mere non-felicities of Newman's style are to be traced to his lack of imagination — imagination, that is to say, of the right sort. Take, for example, this sentence (*Apologia*, p. 52):

"But now, as to the third point on which I stood in 1833, and which I have utterly renounced and trampled upon since,— my then view of the Church of Rome;— I will speak about it as exactly as I can."

Of course, implicit here in the word "stood" is the image of a ground, a position, occupied. One "forsakes," or "abandons," hardly "renounces," a "position"; one "renounces" a "view." But a position or ground, even when called a "point," is not the sort of thing that one "tramples upon"— certainly not after having abandoned it. No doubt the thing to be expressed gets itself expressed; but the question now is of that felicity in expression which must enter as an element into admirable style. "My *then* view" is to be defended, if defended, as a Grecism; it assuredly is not English. If a newspaper reporter should say, as Newman (on the same page) says: "When it was that in my deliberate judgment I *gave up the notion altogether in any shape,* that," etc., we should excuse it because of his haste and his habit of haste, but we should hardly account it an unconscious trait of mastership in style. Infelicitous, nay, downright inaccurate, not to say slipshod, are the following expressions of thought, which, nevertheless, undeniably do — for this is the privilege accorded to genuineness — carry their intended sense:

"It is very common for Christians . . . to place the very substance of religious obedience in a few meagre observances, or particular moral precepts which are easily complied with, and [compliance with] *which they think fit to call giving up the world.*" Sermon, "Christian Manhood."

Again:

"We cannot combine, in our thought of her [the Virgin

Mary], all we should ascribe with all we should withhold." Sermon, "Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin."

Of course we should not wish to make the combination spoken of.

The expression "any how," in the sense of "at any rate," which, printed thus in two separate words — and, by the way, Newman's somewhat peculiar mode of printing I follow scrupulously throughout in quoting from him — is, as before noticed, a recurring use of this writer's — what shall we say of it? That his authority redeems it from the reproach of vulgarity, or of colloquialism too familiar? "However," used prepositively, *e. g.*, "However, I have many difficulties in fulfilling my design" (*Apologia,* p. xxiii.) occurs at times on Newman's page; but it would be hard, I think, to find, outside of Newman himself, high classic authority for this word so placed. Here are instances of correlated tenses mismatched (*Apologia,* p. 345):

"*Had* I *had* any idea that I *should have been exposed* . . . I should have made," etc.

"Since I *could* not *foresee* when I wrote that I *should have been* wantonly slandered," etc.

Page 282 — "Those are the principles on which I *have acted* before I *was* a Catholic," etc.

A not admirable habit on Newman's part of parenthesizing expressions, is exemplified in the following sentence, which the attentive reader will find in other respects also open to criticism. I quote from a famous sermon, that on "The Religion of the Day":

"They ["many religious men"] have strangely imagined that bad men are to be the immediate instruments of the approaching advent of Christ; and (like the deluded Jews not many years since in a foreign country) they have taken, if not for their Messiah (as the Jews did), at least for their Elijah, their reforming Baptist, the Herald of the Christ, children of this world, and sons of Belial, on whom the anathema of the Apostle lies

from the beginning, declaring, 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha.'" ["Instruments" of an "advent"?]

To show examples of fault in a writer in whom we all may find so much to admire, has not been a pleasing task. The examples shown are true examples — that is, they are not mere exceptions to a rule of accuracy and elegance generally prevalent with Newman. Newman's style, not uniformly, but on the whole and not simply in rare passages, is such as I have indicated. The excellences of it, however great and however numerous, must, in any fairly balanced and comprehensive estimate of its quality, be offset with the shortcomings and offenses, *considered as characteristic*, that I have here inadequately exemplified. These shortcomings and offenses are happily quite consistent with the high merits that I began the present criticism by attributing to Newman's style; but they are, in my opinion, far from consistent with the idea that Newman is the best prose writer in the English language, or that he is the best prose writer of his time, or even that he is to be ranked at all among the great classic authors of our literature. He has, in fact, produced nothing whatever likely to survive, in general fame, the vivid interest which his own fascinating and puissant living personality possessed the secret of exciting among his fellows; nothing, unless we except one or two of his pieces in verse, — by eminence his famous "Lead, Kindly Light," of which I may permit myself the digression very briefly to speak.

That this tender little poem has been made a hymn of, is not to be charged to the responsibility of the author. How little he himself conceived it as a hymn, seems incidentally to be shown by the circumstance that, though he painstakingly commences with capital letters even the pronouns referring to the Divine Being, he, in the *Apologia,* prints as title the first three words of this piece without so distinguishing either the adjective or the noun in "kindly light." That expression could not therefore have been, in the author's conception, a figurative name for the Divine Being

in any one of His Three Persons. The piece was evidently begun rather as a pensive meditation than as a devotional outpouring. The exigencies of verse, together with the writer's habitually devout spirit, gave it a strong religious tinge, this tinge growing stronger as the work of composition proceeded; but the meditative element prevailed over the devotional, to the end; indeed, at the end, the very end, altogether absorbed and obliterated that. To this not strictly devotional character of the poem is in large part to be attributed the acceptableness of it with non-religious persons, who may indulge sentiment that they are willing to think of, and to speak of, as religious.

Thus James Anthony Froude, pronouncing "Lead, Kindly Light," the most popular hymn in the language, says of it, "All of us, Catholic, Protestant, or *such as* [like Froude himself] *can see their way to no positive creed at all,* can here meet on common ground, and join in a common prayer." (Italics my own.) No doubt the most "evangelical" of Christians, allegorizing the language of Newman's little poem in a sense to suit themselves, can sing it as a hymn, with true personal worship of God. At any rate, what with the exquisite, and exquisitely adapted, tune that it has been fortunate enough to find, the poem has a wide currency which it is likely long to enjoy — or at least so long as the present period of religious doubt lasts. The tone of the hymn falters far short of the brave believing spirit of the New Testament.

Of the poem, as a piece of literature, and no longer now as a spiritual song, it is to be said that the tenderness of it, the pensive pathos, the longing, the reminiscence, the humility, the hope, will always endear it to the sympathetic heart. Concerning such an effusion, who that enjoys it wishes to be reminded that it lacks true unity; that the conception on which it founds is indeterminate, it being uncertain whether the "home" far-off and longed for, to which "leading" is desired, be literal earthly home, or figured heavenly home, or perhaps harbor and rest in truth found

at last; that the idea of darkness already introduced, by implication of contrast in the terms of the invocation "kindly light," is over-expressed (for a poem so short, wherein the law of frugality should strictly prevail) when, after "encircling gloom," it is insisted that "the night is dark"; that there seems something a little forgetful, or else a little finical, in complaining of the "night" as "dark," and yet speaking ill of the "day" as "garish"; that the idiom of poetry, at least the idiom proper to such a poem as this, is for a moment lost when it is said, with however true a wisdom, yet baldly and prosaically, that "spite of fears, pride ruled my will"; that finally, to have a strain of aspiration, on the whole so high, culminate in the amiable egoism of a hope to meet beloved friends once more, is something of a disappointment to the excited though unformed expectation of the reader — who, I say, that prizes this little poem, wishes to be reminded of these and like points in it? I quote the familiar lines to which I now particularly refer, namely, the last two lines of the "hymn":

> "And with the morn those angel faces smile,
> Which I have loved long since and lost awhile."

That this conclusion to the poem was rather of chance than of choice on the part of the poet, that it was determined by the mood and the circumstances in which he found himself involved, far more than by any sense of organic necessity springing from firm conception creative of unity and completeness for the piece; that in short the last two lines were much in the nature of a way out to the author, found where he was running into a hopeless *cul de sac,* this I for my part had guessed from study of the thing itself, but the following, subsequently met with, from Newman's own hand seemed virtually to admit it. Newman was asked by a correspondent what the true sense of the lines in question was and he replied playfully thus:

"The Oratory, Jan. 18, 1879.

"My Dear Mr. Greenhill:

"You flatter me by your question; but I think it was Keble who, when asked it in his own case, answered that poets were not bound to be critics, or to give a sense to what they had written; and though I am not, like him, a poet, at least I may plead that I am not bound to *remember* my own meaning, whatever it was, at the end of almost fifty years.

"Anyhow, there must be a statute of limitation for writers of verse, or it would be quite a tyranny if, in an art which is the expression not of truth but of imagination and sentiment, one were obliged to be ready for examination on the transient state of mind which came upon one when home-sick, or sea-sick, or in any other way sensitive or excited.

"Yours most truly,

"John H. Newman."

Of course the foregoing pleasant evasion confesses that there really was no worthy sense at all in the lines. Of Newman as poet, then, must we reluctantly say that his attribute of genuineness, at least sometimes, forsakes him? But he disclaims being a poet. On this disclaimer of his, let us allow him to escape the charge of failing, even for once, in his characteristic genuineness.

I should be sincerely sorry to have made the impression the impression would be a distinct misunderstanding of my thought — that, in pronouncing Newman's prose style *characteristically* lacking in felicity of diction, of phrase, and of structure, I mean either to charge upon him an *unvarying* habit of difficulty and awkwardness in expressing himself, or to deny to him occasional, even consummately happy, turns of expression. What I do mean is that infelicity is so *frequent* as justly to be called *characteristic*. It may incidentally serve to show that saying this is not censoriousness in me, if I now recall that brief passage about the "Angels," already for a different purpose remarked upon, and examine it a little carefully for its form of expression. My object is simply to let it appear how,

even in the choicer specimens of his workmanship, the character of infelicity in Newman as a writer is likely to be found. Newman says: "There are Spiritual Intelligences *which* move these wonderful and vast portions of the natural world *which* seem to be inaminate." Capital letters, observe, to emphasize the *personality* of the "Spiritual Intelligences," and yet the relative pronoun "which" employed in referring to them; and this notwithstanding the fact that "which" was to follow almost immediately in a different reference. "Those wonderful and vast portions of the natural world" — how entirely non-felicitous an expression! "Every breath of air and ray of light and heat, every beautiful prospect, is, as it were, the skirts of their garments." That plural predicate after the singular individualized subject — "every breath of air *is* the *skirts* of their garments!" Then the alternative predicate, wherein "the skirts of their garments" becomes "the *waving* of the robes of those whose faces see God in heaven." "Whose faces see God in heaven" is a turn of expression apparently modified from the saying of Jesus concerning "little ones": "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Not happily modified; in the original, it is, as it should be, the "face" that is beheld, whereas in the modification the "faces" are made to do the beholding.

This putting of sentences to the rack may seem a barbarous revival in literary criticism of the question, so called, that odious judicial process now happily obsolete in the civilized world. Let us have no more of it. Meanwhile it may stand as final inexpugnable proof of the diamond quality in Newman's work, that it successfully survives analysis destructive to those mere exterior accidents of beauty in form upon which literary reputation attaching to many another writer so greatly depends. Full expression of my judgment respecting Newman as a writer demands that I say one thing more of his defect in matter of form, namely, that this defect extends, with him, from the structure of the particular sentence, also to the structure of the

sermon, the treatise, the book. An organizing, constructive mind was not his.

As to rhythm, that of course is a matter of ear, but Newman seems to me wanting at this point. He has, perhaps purposely, avoided the sonorous swell, the elaborate balance, of the periodic sentence. There is undoubtedly now, among the best writers, a strong set of tendency in taste against anything approaching the declamatory in rhetoric. This set of tendency in taste Newman has felt; his example, in fact, has probably contributed much to create it. The tendency I speak of is partly a good tendency; but, unchecked, it goes to produce formless and nerveless composition. Now, in literature, matter is indeed more than form; but then valuable matter is worthy of admirable form, while also wise attention to form reacts to produce more valuable matter. An essential element of admirable form in writing consists in commending your style by rhythm to the ear; and I submit that to write: "Has risen up *simultaneously* in many places very *mysteriously;*" to make: "It is not the same as it," stand for a sentence complete in itself, in short, to express one's self in Newman's style, is to concede far less than is desirable to the natural demand of readers for what is agreeable in *sound.*

I now proceed to do what I can toward confuting myself, on this last point of denial to Newman, by quoting the exquisitely pathetic and tender, the deliciously musical, sentences with which he brings his *Apologia* to its close:—

"I have closed this history of myself with St. Philip's name upon St. Philip's feast day; and, having done so, to whom can I more suitably offer it, as a memorial of affection and gratitude, than to St. Philip's sons, my dearest brothers of this House, the Priests of the Birmingham Oratory, Ambrose St. John, Henry Austin Mills, Henry Bittleston, Edward Caswall, William Paine Neville, and Henry Ignatius Dudley Ryder? who have been so faithful to me; who have been so sensitive of my needs; who have been so indulgent to my failings; who have carried me through so many trials; who have grudged no sacrifice,

if I asked for it; who have been so cheerful under discouragements of my causing; who have done so many good works, and let me have the credit of them;—with whom I have lived so long, with whom I hope to die.

"And to you, especially, dear AMBROSE ST. JOHN; whom God gave me, when He took every one else away; who are the link between my old life and my new; who have now for twenty-one years been so devoted to me, so patient, so zealous, so tender; who have let me lean so hard upon you; who have watched me so narrowly; who have never thought of yourself, if I was in question.

"And in you I gather up and bear in memory those familiar affectionate companions and counselors, who in Oxford were given to me, one after another, to be my daily solace and relief; and all those others, of great name and high example, who were my thorough friends, and showed me true attachment in times long past; and also those many younger men, whether I knew them or not, who have never been disloyal to me by word or deed; and of all these, thus various in their relations to me, those more especially who have since joined the Catholic Church.

And I earnestly pray for this whole company, with a hope against hope, that all of us, who once were so united, and so happy in our union, may even now be brought at length, by the Power of the Divine Will, into One Fold and under One Shepherd."

"May 26, 1864. In Festo Corp. Christ."

If, occasionally, in the earlier Newman, there breathed something of the fierceness of the earlier John the Apostle, surely the reader of the foregoing must admit that into the spirit of the later Newman had been wrought much of the sweetness and gentleness of the later John the Apostle. It was melody in the heart which made that melody from the pen.

A few words now in characterization of Newman's sermons as to points no longer involving questions of style, and I have done. It is of the sermons published in eight volumes under the title "Parochial and Plain Sermons," that I limit myself to speak. These were preached while the preacher

was still in the communion of the English Church, that is, between 1825 and 1843.

Apart from the genuineness, the earnestness, the unworldliness, already attributed as general characteristics of everything from Newman's pen, there is an aspect of solemnity, deepening almost into gloom, overspreading the pages of these remarkable volumes. There is the evident effort to irradiate somewhat the darkness of the views presented, but despondency prevails, and, despite himself, the prophet is Jeremiah who speaks here with Newman's voice.

Introspection, pitiless psychological search into the hiding-places of the human heart, analysis of motive, subjection of character to test, branding of the dross, however glittering, therein found, with its own true worthlessness — this is a marked feature of Newman's preaching.

His sermons are eminently thoughtful sermons, for thoughtful souls. One is constrained in reading them to imagine the tense tones, the prophet air, the penetrating personal conviction, the other-world-ly spirit, with which they must have been delivered. We know that in fact they did profoundly impress their hearers. But their hearers, to be thus profoundly impressed, needed to be, as for the most part they were, persons of more than ordinary mental capacity and culture. Newman tried to do faithful humble parish work in his pulpit, but he was limited to do what he could, and necessarily his true parish was composed of select superior minds.

Naturally, perhaps, from Newman's ecclesiastical relation (with a State establishment of religion), his preaching tended to be ecclesiastical rather than scriptural, sacramental, shall we say? rather than even ethical. Evangelicalism, indeed, he expressly spurned. It was outright hateful to him. He treated his hearers all as of course Christian, by virtue of their original unconscious infant baptism into the English Church. The idea of "conversion," as that idea is held by those whom, for convenience, we call evangelical, he scouted:

"I do not wish you to be able to point to any particular time when you renounced the world (as it is called), and were converted; this is a deceit."

So Newman expresses himself in his sermon entitled "The Religion of the Day," in which sermon he says also:

"Though you dare not yet anticipate [one can hardly refrain from printing (?) after the word "anticipate"] you are in the number of Christ's true elect, yet from the first you know He desires your salvation, has died for you, *has washed away your sins by baptism*, and will ever help you. . . . But, at the same time, you can never be sure of salvation while you are here."

These citations, and others like might be made, suffice to show how far from the orthodoxy of "evangelical" Christianity Newman was, even in the period of his least deviation.

But, considered in his own ecclesiastical relation, and in his own personal environment, Newman was a startling voice of verity. The "dull cold ear of death" in the men of his generation and of his class, was roused and compelled to hear. And now, amid whatever class, Newman's sermons, wisely read, could not fail to be an influence, hardly surpassed, to make the present evil world seem justly small and insignificant compared with that world unseen to which we are all, with ever-accelerated speed, ceaselessly hastening. I know of no writer in any literature who applies a more constantly powerful reduction to the imposing pretensions of things seen and temporal to command and absorb our passions and our thoughts. How poor, how paltry, the glittering baubles of this world's pleasure and pride do look to eyes fresh from bath in the "master light" which Newman sheds over his pages!

It would not be unfair to add that the prevailing brevity of Newman's sermons, and their unstudied structure, make them wear the character as much of homilies as of sermons. Their value to the average minister will consist chiefly in

their influence to elevate, to purify, to desecularize, the habitual tone of his thought and his feeling. After this in point of importance, they will contribute to enrich and diversify his store of material for preaching. As mere models of pulpit oratory they will not be found of great practical use.

The sermons entitled "The Religion of the Day," "The Powers of Nature," "The Reverence due to the Blessed Virgin Mary," "The Spiritual Mind," "Witnesses of the Resurrection," may be named as good characteristic specimens of Newman's preaching. The last-named may profitably be compared with Dr. McLaren's remarkable discourse having the same title. The one on "The Religion of the Day" contains a passage of almost fierce outbreaking zeal for religion with power in it, which excited remark in its time, and which may be taken as unconscious "promise and potency" of something not so very unlike the spirit of the "Holy Office."

On the whole, I conclude that, *unless the English-speaking world should become Roman Catholic,* Newman's fame, whether as preacher or as writer, is destined not to wax but to wane. That Oxford movement, otherwise known as the Tractarian movement, of which he was the really greatest motive power, was a strictly local and temporary stir of religious thought. It has had, it promises to have, no important issue. Newman's phenomenal reputation is due, in chief part, to two as it were accidentally cooperative influences — one, a personal or traditional comradeship working in his favor, his case affording an example of the sentiment certain to exist among any given generation of minds, educated together at a University seat like Oxford; and another, the spirit of expiation toward Newman as toward a person long unjustly aspersed, this spirit of expiation working freely, unhindered by any sense of possible rivalry between Englishmen in general and such an individual Englishman as Newman, who had once for all given up everything that could be subject of rivalry among Englishmen in

general. When these two influences have ceased, as with mere lapse of time they will cease, to work in favor of Newman, his name will gradually decline from its present rank as a star of the first magnitude in the English literary heaven to the rank of a luminary still bright indeed with a pure and steady ray, but not conspicuously distinguishable in the great and growing galaxy which zones that intellectual sky with light.

VII

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

By way of introductory note to the following criticism, I reproduce here an article published in "The Independent" newspaper of Sept. 13, 1888, which I entitled, "Mr. Spurgeon Again after Twenty-nine Years":

I have just heard Mr. Spurgeon preach twice after an interval of twenty-nine years since I first heard him. Naturally the parallax of view obtained is partly the hearer's and partly the preacher's; but I have thought that to some, at least, among the readers of "The Independent" it might be interesting to see a brief note made of the two observations in mutual comparison.

Mr. Spurgeon, on the first occasion referred to, was a young man, one might almost say a youth, of twenty-four years. He was still in the fresh recency and surprise of his wonderful fame. He had not himself got used to the popularity that he had so suddenly won. He marveled at it and enjoyed it with something of a boyish delight. "That was a fine congregation!" I remember was almost the first thing he said to me, immediately after the sermon, when I presented to him my letter of introduction. It was characteristic, alike of the man, and of the youth of the man, thus frankly to disclose his joy in the exercise of recognized power.

"I always tremble with fear and with a sense of responsibility when I stand up to preach before that great congregation," he said to me the other day, at fifty-three years of age; "it seems so solemn, so awful." This latter expression, so

different, was equally characteristic of the man, but of the man chastened and sobered with added years.

Apparent ease on his part in preaching was a very marked trait of the youthful Spurgeon; apparent ease is equally a trait of the older man. But twenty-nine years ago the ease seemed, in great part, the buoyant exultation of youth and health; the present ease is that of mastery assured through much experience.

That voice is still, as it was in the beginning, a master-key to the secret of Mr. Spurgeon's extraordinary power. Something perhaps it has lost from the perfect resonant clearness of its first unwasted prime; but it remains a matchless organ of oratory. I put it to a test of some severity the last time I listened to him. It was the Thursday evening sermon. I seated myself in the gallery at nearly the utmost possible remove from the speaker in that vast Tabernacle. His brother James conducted the services preceding the sermon. James's voice was strong, its quality seemed clear, but one heard often the sound of it only, unable to distinguish the words. "Could you follow him?" asked of me a lady near, apparently an habitual hearer, who had just been, in answer to inquiry, giving me the assistant's name. "I could not," I replied. "No more could I," said she. Our failure was from no lack of evident conscientious effort on the part of the speaker to make himself heard. But when Charles's time came, he made no effort apparently, and we heard him as easily as he himself seemed to speak. It was on his part the not meritorious perhaps, but delightful, triumph of a natural gift.

There is no harm, now at least that a stimulating contrast may at the same time be noted, in telling my readers that when, in 1859, I first met Mr. Spurgeon, I happened to become personal witness of what presented him in the character of one who openly drank wine upon occasion. In the draw-

ing-room to which he retired after his morning sermon in Surrey Music Hall, and in which I was invited to meet him, a gentleman, deacon of the church, I believe, took up a bottle of wine, with a glass, and asked: "A little more port, Mr. Spurgeon?" "No, thank you," Mr. Spurgeon replied, adding humorously, after a moment's pause: "Now pray do not hold up that bottle before the window, for the people outside to see — exciting in them desires which you very well know cannot be gratified!" Mr. Spurgeon's example and influence were then felt by the "teetotalers" of England to be heavily against them. It is otherwise now. "Is it true, Mr. Spurgeon, that you now practice total abstinence?" I asked him. "Yes; I have drunk nothing for six or eight years." He said, also, that he was now a vegetarian in his diet. He appeared to me full of vigor, notwithstanding his local infirmities. His ill-health, happily, has never located itself so as to hinder him at all in his power to think soundly and clearly.

Also, neither his ill-health nor the sharp criticism of which his course of action as to the Baptist Union has made him the object, nor yet both of these together have prevailed to change in the least the sweetness of his spirit to bitter or sour. He talked freely, in answer to questions freely propounded, of topics and persons connected with this controversy, but he said nothing that was not wholesomely kind in tone. He seemed to feel unshakenly firm in his position, but he abundantly betrayed, even in his sermons and public prayers, the pain that it gave him to be separate from his brethren and to be blamed instead of praised. Dr. McLaren bore witness to the tender affectionateness of Mr. Spurgeon's heart, and said it was really at great cost of sorrow suffered in the sundering of ties, that Mr. Spurgeon was conscientiously maintaining his present stand. Nobody, Dr. McLaren said, doubted the purity and loyalty of his controlling motive,

and nobody loved him the less for the course he had pursued, however much mistaken in it some might think him to be. Dr. McLaren said this, and then, with characteristic caution and candor, qualified his expression a little to admit a possible exception or two to the universality of his statement that "nobody" loved Mr. Spurgeon the less. What, however, concerns me chiefly just now in relation to the matter is to record the clear impression I took that Mr. Spurgeon remains to this present quite unchanged to harshness in his temper, notwithstanding his grief at the defection of some from the truth, and notwithstanding his keen sense of the hard things that have been said of him. In short, this strict evangelical, this stout Calvinist, this strenuous stander for the old orthodoxy, is personally a most lovable man. He holds men to him, not simply by strength, but also by gentleness, of character.

Old readers of "The Independent," those with long memories, may, some of them, still bear in mind a story that, years ago, the present writer told in these columns of a curious incident in Mr. Spurgeon's preaching. The incident was of a young fellow who complained to me that the great preacher once singled him out in the Tabernacle congregation, and pointed the discourse at him individually, with offensive personality. Of course I did not credit the report, tho I could not doubt that it was honestly given. I assumed it as certain that the young man had merely taken to himself in particular what the preacher had meant only for some such imaginary person in general. But when, some months after, at a private dinner-party in Paris, I repeated the story as a curiosity of mistaken impression, most unexpectedly a gentleman present, who had listened to my narrative with animated interest, said: "But that young man was not mistaken. What he related took place. I sat near him and witnessed it all. The direction of the discourse to him was obvious and

unmistakable. Everybody about him saw it." This testimony seemed to settle the matter, and I told the incident in print, with circumstance, accordingly. The account was afterward reported in the newspapers as pronounced untrue by Mr. Spurgeon. I availed myself of the opportunity offered in my late personal interview with Mr. Spurgeon to recall the incident and to ask him for the truth of the matter. He said nothing ever occurred in his preaching like such a conscious personal direction of discourse to an individual hearer. It must, he said, have been merely the curious coincidence of a particular fact with an imaginary description drawn by him at a venture. He then recounted half a dozen similar coincidences, equally remarkable, that had happened to come to his knowledge. In one case he had said: "Yonder sits a man on the right-hand side in this congregation who brought a bottle of gin with him in his pocket when he came into the house." And the preacher then had proceeded to address this hypothetical person in a strain of appeal suited to his case. A man came to Mr. Spurgeon afterward and said: "How did you know I brought in that bottle of gin? It is true I had just been buying something to warm me before I went home, when the crowd of people pouring in here caught me and swept me in, too. But you said I was on the right-hand side. There you got it wrong. I was on the left-hand side." Mr. Spurgeon smiled and said: "That depends upon how you put it. What was right-hand to me was, of course, left-hand to you. But I drew my bow at a venture. It was the Lord who brought the arrow to its mark." Strange to say, during that same sermon, there sat on the other side of the congregation a second man with a bottle of gin in his pocket. This second man reckoned right and left reversely as compared with the first, and he too was answered in a like formula of explanation. Mr. Spurgeon said both these men were converted as a result of their ex-

perience. The cumulation of instances recounted was alone sufficient to make my case not in itself at all unlikely to have been like the rest, one of mere coincidence; while Mr. Spurgeon's own absolute assertion in reference to his practice in the pulpit puts the point beyond question.

Mr. Spurgeon's noble frankness and simplicity made me feel free to refer with him to a late very extraordinary personal criticism preached and published by Dr. Joseph Parker in the guise of a sermon, having Mr. Spurgeon himself for its subject. With the gentleness of magnanimity, Mr. Spurgeon remarked that he was glad to have furnished to Dr. Parker an occasion for saying anything useful to his congregation; but evidently the example was not one to be followed. "If we ministers," he added, with the best-natured humor imaginable—"if we ministers should take to preaching upon one another, we should soon, I fear, be all at sixes and sevens among ourselves." Mr. Spurgeon said more, but more I should do wrong to repeat. All that he said, and every trait of his manner in saying it, bore exquisite additional testimony to his own unalterable sweetness of spirit.

"Mr. Spurgeon preaches better and better all the time," said one to me whom I happened to meet on the way to the Metropolitan Tabernacle. This was a woman — girl I might better call her, she was so young — evidently, I thought, of the select servant class, well-bred, serious, intelligent. "Our pastor, we think, is constantly improving in his preaching," spontaneously said together a man and woman, doubtless husband and wife, who sat in the seat behind me and kindly answered various questions that I asked.

These last were, as I judged, comparatively cultivated people, representing, therefore, a different class of the congregation. Happy congregation! happy pastor!

In one word, the chief difference that I noted between the Mr. Spurgeon that was and the Mr. Spurgeon that is, consists

in this, that a noble fruit has been ripening, mellowing, sweetening, twenty-nine years. If it please the Heavenly Wisdom, twenty-nine years more of the same gracious process may easily intervene before the hand of the Husbandman shall finally gather him home.

So far the "Independent" article of sixteen years ago. It was only about two years subsequently that, to the same newspaper, at the request of the editor, I furnished, with pain and pleasure strangely blended, an article about Spurgeon deceased. That article will be found subjoined as a kind of summary and supplement, at the conclusion of the original criticism now following.

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

Of Henry Ward Beecher, the reader may remember, I said: "The greatest pulpit orator that the world ever saw — who might also have been the greatest preacher." The terms of this sentence I might almost precisely invert to say now of Charles Haddon Spurgeon: "The greatest preacher that the world ever saw — who might have been one of the greatest orators."

I, indeed, feel ready to express the deliberate opinion that, taken on the whole, Mr. Spurgeon must rank as not second to any preacher whatever in the long history of Christian preaching. The question is not a question of original and creative genius; it is not a question of the production of a few great masterpieces of pulpit eloquence; it is not a question of brilliant rhetorical, of imperial imaginative, gifts; it is not a question of overpowering immediate effects, brought about, perhaps, by happy capture of occasion, or by rare histrionic power in delivery. In the several respects thus suggested, many other men have been equal, some men have been superior, to Mr. Spurgeon; but who else ever began so early in life as he, and continued, without intermission, so long, to turn out sermons so good as his? [This question, let it be borne in mind, was asked while Mr. Spurgeon was still living and still producing sermons. Now, Alexander McLaren, since he has so long survived Mr. Spurgeon, continuing uninterruptedly his preaching career, might fairly be considered a parallel; but if there is any other parallel, then I confess my ignorance, for I do not know of any other.] Think of it. You can count up your *thousands* of Mr. Spurgeon's printed sermons. What fecundity! Put these into volumes of the size of Mr. Phillips Brooks's last collection, that entitled "Twenty Sermons," and you have a tale of

some *one hundred* substantial books! And the market of the world still unabatedly hungry for further supply from the same redounding source! For the space of one whole human generation, the production, with the issue, of these discourses, has gone on — and the producer yet a comparatively young man of only fifty-three years of age! We need not draw on the "hope of unaccomplished years" to say that here is a phenomenon to which the whole past history of the Christian pulpit scarcely furnishes a parallel. Twenty-five years still to follow of this prodigious productiveness is not too much to hope for — and at the end of that period, what an accumulated visible result in print of one man's labor in the preaching of the Gospel of Christ! Two hundred good-sized volumes of sermons the offspring of a single brain! How will Voltaire's miraculous less than one hundred tomes of collected works, eked out with innumerable odds and ends of letters, dwindle in the comparison of count, of volume, and, why should we fear to add, of weight and value!

This suggestion of literary parallel reminds one that Mr. Spurgeon is author as well as preacher. Already, in fact, apart from sermons, he has written books enough to bear, in bulk, no insignificant relation to Voltaire's long-wondered-at voluminous production. And what a man of affairs Mr. Spurgeon has been besides! If he had written nothing and preached nothing, but had only created and organized the beneficent institutions that have, so to speak, spontaneously sprung up at the signal of the sound of his feet as he passed along — these alone would have been considered, and would have seemed worthy to be considered, not simply an adequate, but a remarkable, account to render of the sustained and continuous effort of a long lifetime. I must not be diverted to expatiate here on Mr. Spurgeon the man; for it is of the preacher Mr. Spurgeon that I am properly limited to speaking. But that the preacher whom we study is such a man as he is, it would be mere blindered narrowness not at least incidentally to remember — a man, namely, who, in point of breadth, of depth, of intensity, and of prob-

able duration, of influence for good to the human race, is not surpassed, perhaps not equaled, by any peer of his belonging to his own generation.

You must judge sermons as sermons. What are sermons? They are popular harangues or addresses, having it for their object to make Christians, or to make better Christians, of their hearers or readers. That, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else, is what sermons are. That is, true sermons, ideal sermons, sermons accordant with the Scripture conception of preaching. Apply this standard of judgment, and where will you find a body of sermons better than Mr. Spurgeon's? Where will you find so large a body of sermons, proceeding from a single man, so good? Power of original delivery being taken into the account, is not Mr. Spurgeon the foremost of preachers? Multiply his quality by his quantity, and your product, raised to the *nth* power by the first eloquent utterance — where else will you equal it among the Christian preachers of all races and all ages? Nowhere, I think. But the quantity is a factor of which I make much, in saying this. The quality — when you appraise it by the right standard — is good, is excellent; but the quantity is immense, is overwhelming.

You must not look for mere elegance of style. You must not look for clairvoyant psychologic intuition, for fruitful philosophic analysis. You must not look for originality and suggestiveness of thought. You must not look for elaborate and artful climaxes, for passages of imaginative splendor, for bursts of passionate ecstasy. None of these things. You must look for straightforward, clear, plain, strong, telling utterance, such as brings truth home to the average man's "business and bosom." You must look for order and arrangement, effective, rather than gratifying to the sense of ideal perfection in form. You must look for those great commonplaces of truth which are justly the staple of all right preaching. You must look for illustration apt rather than esthetically beautiful, for lively presentation to the understanding of ordinary men, for pungent application

to the conscience, for practical application to the will. Look for these things, and you will seldom look in vain in Mr. Spurgeon's preaching.

Power of expression as completely commensurate with the thought to be expressed, as was Mr. Beecher's, thought, too, in supply equally unfailing, belongs to Mr. Spurgeon. The difference at this point between the two men is that Mr. Spurgeon's thought is more commonplace, and that, therefore, a more commonplace expression serves him. Mr. Spurgeon has no fine-spun sentiment, no poetic reveries, to find words for. He does not need, so much as did, for instance, Mr. Beecher, to call in the aid of the imagination. But why disguise the fact? Mr. Spurgeon evidently possesses no such supreme imagination as was that great gift which made Mr. Beecher the magnificent poet in oratory that he was. Mr. Spurgeon travels stoutly on foot, whereas it was Mr. Beecher's to "turn and wind a fiery Pegasus." Mr. Spurgeon, accordingly, does not venture at all into those empyreal regions of thought and of fancy to which Mr. Beecher had buoyancy of genius enough not only to rise easily and familiarly himself, but to raise his hearers also with him when he rose, sustaining them there as long as, on any occasion, he might choose to keep his pinions weighed and spread. Mr. Spurgeon is as strong as the strongest to climb, but he is no eagle, as was Mr. Beecher, to soar. He likes to keep where he can feel the solid earth under his feet; but on that his tread is the tread of a giant. The comprehensive intellectual difference, in short, between Mr. Spurgeon and Mr. Beecher is exactly the difference between a man possessing every other endowment but not possessing genius, and a man superadding genius to every other endowment.

But if genius was what, in Mr. Beecher, carried over self-confidence into audacity, and if the absence of genius is what keeps self-confidence from becoming audacity in Mr. Spurgeon, then to Mr. Spurgeon the withholding of genius may be considered to have been a saving and beneficent Provi-

dential denial, as truly as was the bestowment of genius a fatal gift to Mr. Beecher.

For the intellectual audacity, which was a trait of Mr. Beecher, is contrasted in Mr. Spurgeon against absolute intellectual docility. Not, indeed, docility toward men; but docility toward God. Toward men, Mr. Spurgeon bears himself every whit as lordly and as free as did ever Mr. Beecher. An exemplification of this is the great preacher's frank, outspoken dissent from his personal and political friend, Mr. Gladstone, in that great leader's proposal of home rule for Ireland. But toward God, God revealing himself in his word, Mr. Spurgeon is as lowly as a child. His attitude is the attitude of young Samuel. It constantly says: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." The contrast of Mr. Spurgeon to Mr. Beecher, at this capital point, is as intense as a contrast could be. "Let God be true and every man a liar," is, as it were, the motto and the watchword of Mr. Spurgeon's life.

Count out Mr. Beecher's genius, and his deficient subordination toward God (God revealing himself in his Word), and you may say that Mr. Spurgeon's equipment is otherwise substantially the same as was the great Brooklyn preacher's. There is, at least, the same infallible common sense; infallible and alert, springing sometimes into opportune quickness of wit, or playing into cheerful sallies of humor.

There could hardly be imagined an intellectual diversion more entertaining than it would be to have witnessed a public encounter between these two men in discussion, before a popular audience, of some subject which engaged them both deeply, and on which they entertained differing views. "Is it not true that Spurgeon is a follower of Calvin? And is *he* not an eminent example of success?" was asked of Mr. Beecher at Yale, after some disparagement from the lecturer of Calvinism. "In spite of it, yes," replied Mr. Beecher; "but I do not know that the camel travels any better, or is any more useful as an animal, for the hump on its back." "Admirably answered," probably thought many

a young man who listened to this smart turn of the lecturer. But Mr. Spurgeon was to speak. Commenting on Mr. Beecher's most unfortunate illustration (which is retained in the lectures as printed), Mr. Spurgeon in due time pointed out that, as a fact of animal physiology, the hump on the camel's back was a wise and indispensable provision of nature for making the wearer capable of his great endurance. The hump, instead of being an excrescence only contributing ugliness to the camel's appearance, was as a breast of nourishment to maintain the camel's strength. Mr. Beecher had supplied to Mr. Spurgeon's hand a weapon of illustration to serve for his own easy and utter discomfiture.

Mr. Spurgeon is a Calvinist, and he preaches Calvinism. But it is Calvinism of a moderate type, about such Calvinism as Andrew Fuller expounded; and it is not as Calvinism that Mr. Spurgeon preaches it, but as the teaching of Christ and of Paul. This Calvinistic orthodoxy the preacher hugs to his heart, feeding from it as the camel feeds from his hump. He thinks of it neither as beauty nor as deformity, but only as truth. The "new theology" finds no favor in Mr. Spurgeon's eyes. He spurns it, tramples on it. In his monthly magazine, "The Sword and the Trowel," he thus summarily characterizes a certain American book, one of the authorities of the "new theology":

"Some 300 pages of sublime balderdash, and there was no earthly reason why its author should not have made them 3,000. You have nothing to do but muddle your brain and set your tongue going, and the result is unbounded nothing in big words."

Does this seem brutal? Does it look like mere blind bigotry? Well, it is not. For, at not far from the same date, Mr. Spurgeon holds, of "Ecce Homo," a highly unorthodox book, the following language:

"We shall never forget the day in which we fell in with 'Ecce Homo.' We were starting for York, and we opened the book as we left the London terminus. How the train proceeded,

and at what stations we stopped, we never knew. Having taken one plunge into the depths of the book, we only rose out of them to consciousness when the northern city was reached. The memory is sweet to us."

That I submit is not the language of a blind orthodox bigot. Surely there is "sweetness and light" in such a spirit as speaks there. Mr. Spurgeon declared that all depended on who was the writer of "Ecce Homo":

"The anonymous book was specially good if written by a candid unbeliever, and singularly traitorous if composed by a professed Christian."

What Mr. Spurgeon cannot abide is paltering with the Word of God on the part of one who professedly accepts it as authority. This it is that draws the lightning of his displeasure launched in disdainful expressions like the foregoing about the American "new theology" book.

A square-toed, flat-footed believer and preacher is Mr. Spurgeon. No trimming in him. No attempted mediation between this and that. No capitulation to infidelity effected under the form of seeking new modes of expression for truth. No "Sartor Resartus" philosophy, no feint of merely changing your clothes — ostensibly to secure a better fit, really for the sake of coming out a quite new-fangled, different man. Mr. Spurgeon will none of this. The talked-of evolution and transformation of the church of Jesus Christ, if such be indeed in progress, is a tidal movement that at least must count on stemming Mr. Spurgeon's influence as a stubborn refluent wave of opposition to be first overcome before the predicted consummation is finally reached. Mr. Beecher was full easily involved; nay, he made haste, he would be first, to be overwhelmed by it. Mr. Spurgeon stands as stoutly resistant as ever. He thinks evolutionism itself — evolutionism such as was Mr. Beecher's melancholy final "phase of faith" — to be but an eddy, a moment's recession, in that true eternal tide which he feels drawing all

things obedient, willingly or unwillingly, to the personal reign of Jesus Christ.

What, then, is the analysis of this great preacher's power? The question is a problem much like the problem attacked by Gibbon, when that great historian undertook to give the causes for the early spread of Christianity. Let us here do sincerely, what Gibbon is accused of insincerely doing, take for granted the omnipotent working of the Spirit of God, and then reckon as well as we can the things subordinate to that which together make up the indivisible total sum of Mr. Spurgeon's amazing power.

Hear him preach. You have before you a by no means impressive-looking, nay, a quite undistinguished-looking, man. Knowing, let us suppose, nothing of the preacher's previous history, and not observing the present spectacle of the magnificent audience assembled — in short, simply regarding the man visible to the eye, you acknowledge no spell of influence proceeding from him to make you feel beforehand that you are a predestined captive to his tongue.

But he speaks. That voice! It is like a flute, like a silver bell, like a trumpet, like an organ. What an instrument of speech! The pathos in it wins you, the clearness of it captivates you, the soundness of it satisfies you, the music of it enchants you, the power of it subdues you, overwhelms, enthralls. The ear's surprise, delight, and triumph more than make up any disappointment to the eye. Mr. Spurgeon is far from being, on all occasions, uniformly equal to himself rated at his own best; but whatever else may fail him, his voice is sure to be a great resource.

Years ago it happened to the present writer to hear Mr. Spurgeon preach a sermon on the cry of blind Bartimeus. The sermon was but an ordinary one. The preacher seemed to labor like a ship half water-logged. But the voice redeemed the effect. At one point — it was a passage of realistic description designed to depicture the scene and the occasion of the text — Mr. Spurgeon, interspersing, after each new return, on his part, to the words of the blind man's

appeal, some sentences of remark, repeated at intervals again and again the cry, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." The impression throughout depended wholly on the voice. Would the voice respond, with endless increments of power, to its owner's remorseless demands? I wondered and watched with sympathetic anxiety. It seemed reckless in the preacher to risk himself so. After two or three successful experiments, on his part, I expected, with each succeeding repetition of those words, to hear the preacher's voice break and fail. I might as well apprehensively expect to see the Atlantic give out, when a storm was wreaking it wave after wave on a shore. Six times, I should think, by count, the repetitions rose one upon another in volume or in pitch, and the voice was as clear, as firm, as apparently unstrained, at the last as at the first. And I had needlessly been saying with myself, a number of times, "Now, pray, do not try that again. The human voice *can* no further go."

Such is Mr. Spurgeon's voice. The farthest hearer can hear with ease and pleasure, while not even the nearest hearer is discomforted with noise.

The next thing to strike the observant and thoughtful listener is the unfailing flow and the pellucid strain of Mr. Spurgeon's diction. The absolute ease of the vocal delivery is completely matched by an absolute ease in the mental supply. You seem to see a "long bright river" of silver speech unwound, evenly and endlessly, like a ribbon from a revolving spool that should fill itself as fast as it emptied itself. The quality of the words is, in general, as pure as the volume of them is copious. Occasionally, a word not up to the standard of good taste may escape; occasionally, a word chosen for its sound rather than for its exact aptness to the sense — the speaker's fancy caught, or the speaker trusting that his hearer's fancy will be caught, by an alliteration or an assonance — but, for the most part, Mr. Spurgeon's diction is a true "well of English undefyled."

The syntax is as noteworthy as is the vocabulary. There

are no tangles of construction. There are no long suspensions of sense. There are no harsh inversions of order. There are no laborious ambitions of climax. The sentences are short and direct. They go straight on their way to their goal. Following one of them is like watching the flight of an arrow to its mark.

Presently you rouse yourself to consider, "Is there adequate thought represented by all this affluence of words, by all this manifold facile construction of sentences? The discourse goes on, true, but does it go on saying something?" You notice carefully and you are reassured. You perceive that there is always meaning, and always worthy meaning, conveyed. The thought is not often new, not often startling, not often profound; but there is thought, just thought, wholesome thought, useful thought. Mr. Spurgeon is not a great thinker, thinking in public aloud. He does not make an enlarged minister's-study of his auditorium, and take his congregation into the confidence of his private intellectual activities. To enter his pulpit, or rather to go upon his platform, he leaves his study behind him, with all its methods and all its processes, and comes forth, a man among men, to communicate his results in language that common people cannot fail to understand, because in language taken out of the common people's mouths.

The element of appositeness is likely to be present with strength, in a sermon of Mr. Spurgeon's. This great preacher knows his occasion, and he meets it with instinctive and with conscientious self-adjustment. I shall never forget an example of this that it was my own good fortune to witness.

The second great World's Fair in London had just been opened. The metropolis was thronged with strangers, and all men's minds were full of the great exhibition. Mr. Spurgeon took for his text that passage of Ephesians, "That now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." He began by remarking on the vast frequence

of people present in the city from all over the world to attend the great exhibition just opened. Their object — what was it but to survey, in many forms, the triumphs of human contrivance, the manifold wisdom of man? But there was, the preacher said, a more glorious exhibition in progress. To it, through the long corridors of the ages, angelic intelligences, the principalities and powers in heavenly places, were thronging. These spectators came that they might behold and study in "the church the manifold wisdom of God." I never heard an apter, or more impressive, introduction. The effect was brilliant in oratory, but, what was far better, it was profoundly, soberingly, religious. The sermon that followed sustained the promise of the exordium. It was truly majestic. The Mr. Spurgeon whom I had heard, perhaps, half a dozen times before, was transfigured that day into the glory of a prophet. How much was due to the occasion? Much, doubtless; but nothing whatever would have been due to the occasion, if the preacher had not made use of the occasion. Let me correct myself, then, and say that, in strictness, nothing whatever was due to the occasion, but all to wise use of the occasion.

It is worth separate and emphatic remark that the opening services on the occasion referred to, signally prepared for the powerful effect of the sermon. Indeed, Mr. Spurgeon's opening services in general are quite as remarkable as the sermon that follows. Life tingles through them all like blood leaping along the veins; rather, like blood circulating everywhere through the body. The invocation, the announcement of the hymn, the Scripture-reading, with the brief, pithy comment accompanying, the prayer — in all these the preacher offers up his life not less truly than he does in his sermon. They are not mere scaffolding to the sermon; they and the sermon together constitute one noble edifice, in which the sermon may be the largest, but in which it is scarcely otherwise the most honored, stone.

Another characteristic of Mr. Spurgeon's preaching is sustained evenness of pitch. There are comparatively few

violent changes of feeling in one of his sermons. He may now move you almost to smile, and now open in you the sluices of tears, but you will not experience within yourself anything in the nature of an abrupt transition. With Mr. Beecher, in preaching, the weather was often that of a changeful summer afternoon. The sun would cheerfully shine; anon the clouds would gather, the wind would rise, the thunder would roll, the lightning would flash, the rain would pour down; presently the clouds would part again and the sun, looking forth, would light up the face of nature, and give it an aspect as of one smiling through tears. And then, perhaps, a like succession of changes once more. Mr. Spurgeon's weather is more steady. It either changes little, or it changes by gentle degrees. No wilful, wayward Prospero is Mr. Spurgeon, to play with the elements, and conjure tempest. You do not, hearing him, feel yourself in the presence of incalculable, mysterious, as it were magical, power. The kind of influence you are under seems to you intelligible enough. The quantity of the influence — that is what overwhelms you. You are simply overborne by force like your own force, but force more and heavier than you could have mustered, or than you can now resist. And there was plenty of reserve behind, had more force been needed.

A further thing which you observe upon reflection, is that Mr. Spurgeon's plan of discourse seldom unfolds and grows like a plant from a seed, and seldom tends progressively to cumulation of single conclusive effect. His strength is mere main strength, and not strength multiplied by momentum amassed through motion, momentum discharged at last in one tremendous blow.

Here is the plan or order of a late discourse of Mr. Spurgeon's — one delivered on occasion of the Queen's semi-centennial jubilee. The title is, "Jubilee Joy." The text is, "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." The introduction consists of an affectionately loyal tribute to the British sovereign, merging by transition into exhorta-

tion to rejoice in the heavenly King. Admirable in judgment, taste and spirit. Then follow these points, successively treated:

I. Let us begin by feeling that the Lord Jesus is our King.

II. Let us go on to study his royal character.

III. Let us be joyful in the continuance of our Redeemer's reign.

IV. Being joyful in our King, let us obey him with delight.

Evidently, in such a plan as that, there is no striking intellectual merit to be found. Only a master in the art of expansion or amplification could make anything of it in preaching. To say truth, the sermon is little more than one continued exhortation. It is Mr. Spurgeon's unrivaled command of expression that carries it off with the hearer. "It is time to finish," the preacher says, in conclusion; he has reached the end of his "time"—that, rather than the end of any argument or discussion.

In short, Mr. Spurgeon is a great preacher, rather than a preacher of great sermons. If this is not praise, it certainly is not dispraise. To preach great sermons is, no doubt, the prouder intellectual triumph; but the more useful service, and the rarer moral attainment, is to be a great preacher. To do both is, perhaps, more than is ever given to one man. At least to produce continuously for thirty-three years at the numerical rate maintained by Mr. Spurgeon, hardly admits of also producing, even occasionally, on a scale of intellectual grandeur such as was exemplified in Bossuet or in Robert Hall. But probably Mr. Spurgeon's original endowment, necessarily having somewhere its impassable limits, had these in the line of superlative intellectual quality.

Running back and forth, in studious observation, between the matter and the manner in Mr. Spurgeon, you become aware that, in consonance with the comparatively equable tenor of his discourse itself, considered as thought, this

preacher is scarcely at all an actor, but almost purely an orator, in his style of delivery. Here is one more point of sharp contrast between him and Mr. Beecher. In Mr. Beecher the histrionic, the mimetic, instinct was irresistibly strong. One of that preacher's more characteristic sermons would be well-nigh as much a spectacle as it was an harangue. The eye was hardly less entertained than was the ear. Partly for this reason, and partly for the reason that Mr. Beecher's idea of preaching permitted him to introduce all sorts of matter the most unusual into his pulpit addresses, his Sunday services often were such that frivolous people were tempted to pronounce going to Plymouth Church to be as good as going to the theater. For neither of these two reasons would the like ever be said respecting attendance at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London. There is no journalistic element in Mr. Spurgeon's preaching, and, as for the theatrical, he might well covet a greater share than apparently he possesses, of the histrionic capacity, to supplement and reenforce his noble oratoric gift.

One passing under review the whole cycle of Mr. Spurgeon's intellectual production is impressed with the personal attribute displayed of honest industry on the part of the author. A vast amount of downright hard work this greatly gifted man has done. He has not tried to make his mill turn out grist from the spout without his having previously poured grist, full proportion, into the hopper. He has never committed the folly of pumping himself, or draining himself, dry. He has kept himself full, brimming, and has simply — overflowed. This is the secret of his exhaustless production. He is a wide and various reader. He knows much of the best that has been written in the world. It is not an ignorant man that preaches Mr. Spurgeon's sermons — it is a well-informed, a cultivated, man. The sons of light only show their own narrowness when they speak of Mr. Spurgeon as narrow. And the ministers who think Mr. Spurgeon a good pattern to follow in the matter of simplicity and of scripturalness in preaching, would do well

to emulate him also in the enterprise and industry of his multifarious, but not indiscriminate, reading.

Sincere, practical, working conscientiousness is a further trait of personal character in Mr. Spurgeon, kindred with his trait of faithful industry just noted. This led him, for instance, a few years ago to give up, on principle, the use of wine and beer as beverages. I, myself, from actual observation on the spot, well remember how sore an obstruction to their cause the "teetotalers" of England used to feel, not only the self-indulging example, but the outspoken hostile word and influence, of Mr. Spurgeon to be. Now, he is in practice a "total abstainer" himself, and he neglects no opportunity to give impulse to the movement for total abstinence throughout the world. He testifies to the increased mental freedom, clearness, and force, enjoyed by him since this change in his habits.

It is no part, ever, of any servant's privilege to praise or to blame, as by authority, a fellow-servant. To his own master alone each one of us must stand or fall. But certainly I should not be able, on challenge, to name any man in history who seems to me to have come nearer to making, from the very beginning, the most that was possible of himself, and to doing the most that was possible with himself, than has Charles Haddon Spurgeon. He possesses in full measure every natural qualification for being a great statesman — especially that capital qualification, the orator's gift. But he chose wisely to be a preacher. To be the greatest of preachers is greater than to be the greatest of orators. Mr. Spurgeon is now, as we may hope, little more than midway of his unretarded career; but the stainless past makes one confident in rejoicing, by anachronism, already, that a fame so splendid was also a fame to the end so fair.

[In writing the paper now to follow for "The Independent," I yielded to the urgent request of the editor. But I had never so reluctantly yielded to such editorial request

before. I sprang joyfully, indeed, at the thought of paying grateful, admiring, and affectionate tribute to a dear and honored memory; but my heart was too heavy with grief for any proper buoyancy of mind. A great light had gone out in the sky, and I seemed to feel, in something more than my own just measure, the darkening of the world.]

How well I remember when the news first came across the Atlantic — it must have been about the year 1855 — that a young preacher in London was renewing, and more than renewing, the pulpit triumphs of Whitefield and of Edward Irving! I was myself at that time still a student in college, and this young preacher, already famous by the then novel name of Spurgeon, was only of an age about equal to my own. During all the time succeeding until now, a period beyond the space of a human generation, Mr. Spurgeon has not for one moment intermitted to be upon the whole the most popular, and, let us not hesitate to say, the greatest, preacher in the world. It is a long term of activity and of world-wide renown that Mr. Spurgeon has thus been permitted to fulfil. But he has fallen in the very meridian of his days, and his career seems prematurely cut short.

In boldly pronouncing Mr. Spurgeon the greatest preacher in the world, of his time, I have indeed been perhaps not bold enough. It is not unlikely that, if all the just conditions of comparison were adequately taken into account, Mr. Spurgeon might appear to be conspicuously the greatest preacher of all times since the age of the Apostles. However this may be, certain it is that, besides being foremost among his peers as a preacher, this prodigious man has, during three decades of years, been also one of the most fruitful and most steadily popular of authors. When it is added, that he has exhibited one of the most successfully organific minds, one of the most stimulating and sustaining forces of personal character anywhere coevally at play among men; and further, beyond all this, that he has

meantime been distinctively a teacher of preachers, past comparison more influential than any single one of his fellows and contemporaries in that vocation, something like a just estimate in outline has been projected of the magnitude of what the world has so long been enjoying in Mr. Spurgeon, and of what it has now lost in his death. Of course, it is not what Mr. Spurgeon *was,* that I mean in speaking of the loss that his death brings to the world, for what Mr. Spurgeon was, the world has not lost. The past at least is secure, and that is immortal. The world has lost only what Mr. Spurgeon might have been in the many unaccomplished years, the hope of which was, until lately, large and lucid round his brow.

I have implied that the subject of this paper began extraordinarily early his extraordinary career. But the definite arithmetical statement is far more impressive than the indefinite rhetorical. He was not yet twenty years of age when he accepted the call of the historic New Park Street Baptist Church in London to be their pastor. That this youth, not regularly educated, quite innocent of taint from college culture of any kind, would sustain himself as an acknowledged power, in the metropolis of the world, through an unbroken period of almost forty years — who would have predicted it? But such a prediction would have fallen far short of being sufficiently audacious; and the fulfilment awaiting was not merely ample, it was overflowing. The whole history reads like a romance.

How the spirit and tradition of the man of whom I am speaking seems graciously to rebuke the way in which I have laxly allowed myself to speak of him! "'Sustain himself!'" I hear him exclaiming. "Indeed, I did not for one moment sustain myself. Underneath, all the time, was the Everlasting Arm. That was what held me up. I myself did nothing but fall incessantly. But I fell upon support that would not let me be quite cast down."

This was Mr. Spurgeon's genuine feeling about himself. His sense of his weakness was, in large part, the secret of

his strength. And, paradoxical as it is to say so, his weakness reached perhaps its very strongest at the point of self-confidence. For he was an exceptionally self-confident man. So conspicuous, indeed, and so vivific, was this element in his character, that a hasty analysis might well have pronounced it the true spring of his power. It would have been such, in a worldly Spurgeon pursuing a worldly career. It might even, in that hypothetical case, have produced an apparent result apparently greater than the one that the actual Spurgeon actually accomplished. But, however greater in seeming, it would really have been far less. Whatever part in the total sum of Spurgeon's achievement is justly to be credited to his own personality asserting itself beyond due bounds in the spirit of self confidence natural to the man, should be subtracted from, not reckoned in, the net, enduring, purified fruit of his life. How large that part is I shall not undertake publicly to estimate. Indeed, I do not dare to estimate it privately. The thing significant is, that the quality of Mr. Spurgeon's work was, on the whole, as transcendent as the quantity was remarkable. The quality is, therefore, even more remarkable than the quantity. Justly appreciated, it serves to make the quantity itself greater.

The new Park Street pastor, yet in his teens, had to have more room for the hearers that wanted to come. The "chapel" was enlarged. The enlarged chapel would not hold the throngs that surged, Sunday after Sunday, at the doors. Resort was had to the most capacious available audience room to be found in London. This was the Royal Surrey Gardens Music Hall. In this vast room, Mr. Spurgeon, now a youth of twenty-two, preached to audiences not only imposing in numbers, but imposing also often in the rank and renown of individual hearers. Church of England people, who could not go to hear the famous sectary in a conventicle, might venture to allow themselves that pleasure in a neutral place of assembling like a public hall. So, rank and title, social splendor, and splendor of civic fame,

flowed into Surrey Gardens to listen to the preaching of Spurgeon.

Of course, use of a public hall could be only a temporary expedient for the accommodation of a regular congregation. It was resolved to build a meeting-house unprecedentedly great. There had been a man found who could not only fill such a place with hearers but could also fill it with sound, from the clearest, the sweetest, the most flexible, the most tunable, the most various, the most elastic, the furthest-going, the most inexhaustible, voice in the world. The Metropolitan Tabernacle was finished in 1861, with a seating capacity which reached at least 5,500, supplemented by standing room for 1,000 more, thus accommodating in all 6,500 persons. For thirty years this immense auditorium has, Sunday after Sunday, been filled with people. Only a few months ago I seated myself in the fringe of the great congregation, and took careful note of two things, first, whether I could hear well every word, and secondly, whether the attendance had fallen off at all with the attrition of years. Yes, I could hear; no, there was no falling off; the Tabernacle was full. It was an ordinary Sunday morning occasion, the weather unpropitious. There were no persons standing, but the seats were all occupied. Alas, the great preacher came painfully to his place on the platform, leaning upon the top of his staff! The touchingness of the sight was, to me, no insignificant part of the eloquence.

The spiritual fruitfulness was, from the first, no less remarkable than the intellectual triumph, of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry. Within ten years from the commencement of his London pastorate, 3,569 persons had been baptized into the fellowship of the church. I have before me, as I write, an authorized statistical table of figures for the years 1861-1877. This exhibits a steady annual increase of numbers, an increase not once interrupted, in the membership of the church, up to 5,152 in 1877.

While such fruit was being gathered under the sound

of the preacher's living voice, a result not incommensurate was springing from the printed sermons of Mr. Spurgeon. The weekly issue of these began in 1855. It has continued without intermission ever since. [This is still true down to the present moment, 1905.] The sale has for many years averaged 25,000 copies for every sermon. Mr. Spurgeon's publishers told me last spring that that was their regular edition then. And this takes no account of the circulation of the sermons through the innumerable newspapers, all over the English-speaking world, that reprinted them week by week. Nearly 2,500 different sermons in all have thus been given to the world in print, from the brain and heart of this prolific religious genius. There is nothing, I believe, in human history to parallel, hardly to approximate, such a record. But the most noteworthy thing about it is that Mr. Spurgeon was constantly receiving from all over the world personal or documentary evidence of conversions referred by the subject to the influence of sermons of his read by them in print, or perhaps heard read by them from print; for these sermons were, in many scattered places, the Sunday food of congregations of hearers.

Particular sermons of Mr. Spurgeon's became exceptionally famous. Of these the most memorable was, no doubt, a sermon on "Baptismal Regeneration," the sale of which had, many years ago, reached the enormous total of 198,000 copies. This discourse occasioned a truly extraordinary activity of tongue and pen in controversy. More than a hundred separate publications, mostly pamphlets, drawn out by Mr. Spurgeon's sermon, were actually collected within the two years following, and these are said to be now preserved in bound volumes belonging to the Pastor's College Library. Not a few other sermons of his have sold to the number of 100,000 copies.

It is impracticable, within the just limits of a paper like this, to do more than suggest the manifold fruitful activities of this great mind. I have just named the Pastor's College. This is an institution founded and maintained by

Mr. Spurgeon, in a sense more full than that in which any other such institution ever existing could truly be said to have been founded and maintained by a single individual. It has educated nearly a thousand students. The education imparted has been imperfect, no doubt, and many intelligent friends of ministerial training have thought that the influence of the Pastors' College told powerfully against, as well as powerfully for, the cause it ostensibly served. But what an illustration the history of that seminary constitutes of the rich fecundity of the organizing genius that so early as the year 1854 gave it birth!

The Stockwell Orphanage, too, dating from 1866, with which Mr. Spurgeon's name is inseparably associated — to have been the means of establishing and wisely administering that, would by itself alone, be no despicable account to be able to give of the conduct of a life.

A still different form of benevolent activity, one not only Christian but distinctly evangelic, evangelistic indeed, was the Colportage Society, founded and directed by Mr. Spurgeon. This institution, too, has a noteworthy record of useful work accomplished. There ought perhaps to be added mention of the Book Fund, Mrs. Spurgeon's specialty, which, for many years, has been the means of annually distributing a large number of printed volumes all over the three kingdoms, especially among ministers who otherwise would have lacked, in great measure, such food to their minds.

All the foregoing examples of Mr. Spurgeon's fertility and force in organization and administration were always vitally related to a later important direction of his enterprising mind, of which I have hitherto not furnished even a hint. I refer to his monthly magazine, "The Sword and the Trowel," started in 1865. Mr. Spurgeon, then, was editor, too, as well as preacher, author, teacher, organizer.

As to his authorship, the list of his books, apart from his sermons, is very long. These all have been successful, and some of them have been extraordinarily successful. His

"John Plowman's Talk," for example, sold, within three years from the date of its publication in book form, to the number of 110,000 copies.

An article like the present cannot possibly be complete, but it must necessarily have bounds. When I have added that Mr. Spurgeon had a brother James (surviving him), who was not only a fellow minister of the Gospel, but in a peculiarly intimate confidential relation partner of his pastoral labor, and had two sons, twin-born, Thomas and Charles, who have both followed their father in his office as preacher, I shall have said all that I properly can here say in the way of irregular biography. Mr. Spurgeon was born in June, 1834, and was therefore fifty-seven years of age when he died. What a crowded life he lived! How he made the atmosphere far and wide about him hum with his elemental intellectual activity! What a silence, what a vacancy, now that he has gone!

It is probably safe to assume that the peculiar conditions that have surrounded him, in the religious world in which he lived and moved and had his being, during the few years last past, have hastened his death. I refer, of course, to the far-renowned "Down-grade" controversy, so called, with its accompanying incidents. No one that does not know the genial affectionateness of Mr. Spurgeon's temper and his extreme fondness for friendship and the continuance and fast knitting of old ties, can appreciate the cost in nerve and heart at which he has, during these many months of failing bodily health, but unfailing mental force, maintained his warfare for what he felt to be the imperiled truths of the Bible. Every bond that snapped between him and a brother minister, especially if that minister were to him not only brother, but, as it were, a son, that is, an old student of his, made his heart bleed, and tapped in him the very fountain of life. He laded himself with taskwork in the cause of Bible truth, till the ship sank almost below the water-line — quite below the water-line it proved at last! I have a little autograph note now from the weary hand,

written in the mid-stress of preparation for the last spring's anniversary of his college. The main purport of it was to tell how he staggered under the load he was carrying, and how he dared not increase it by so much as a penny-weight. It was pathetic when I received it — how much more pathetic now!

The dear, great, gentle, lion heart! How shall I compose myself to take tranquil account of the elements that made up such a nature?

In the physical man, Mr. Spurgeon's voice was his chief good fortune in endowment. But that good fortune would nigh have compensated for the lack of every other. The wonder of Mr. Spurgeon's voice grew upon me the more I considered it and compared it. He used it without *any* apparent effort, and it answered every purpose of his will. In its utmost violence I never heard from it one note that grated harshly on the ear. It was virile, but it hid in its virile sweetness an effect of womanly winningness that was almost pathetic. In the mere matter of making people hear, Mr. Spurgeon accomplished with his voice feats probably never surpassed, I doubt if ever equaled. I was told, and I believe, that in Agricultural Hall, in London, a place described as being like uninclosed space for vastness, he made himself distinctly audible to 12,000 people. His voice, when he was speaking so as to be heard by such a number, would be no less agreeable to those persons nearest him than to those farthest removed, and hardly less distinct to those farthest removed than to those nearest. It was an instrument of speech that either needed no management, or was so perfectly managed that it seemed to need none. It was the perfection of nature, or else the perfection of both nature and art.

The thing most obvious and most striking in Mr. Spurgeon's mental endowment was his preternatural command of language, both vocabulary and syntax. For simple, lucid flow of appropriate speech, so uninterrupted and so easy that it seemed like lubricity itself become vocal and expres-

sive, I never heard anything anywhere that even approached Mr. Spurgeon's habitual discourse. Mr. Beecher was great at this point; but he had his fits of greater and less, was eruptive sometimes, explosive. Mr. Spurgeon *never* faltered. He never went faster than he wished to, for fear that if he went slower he might come not to go at all. He never went slow because he could not go faster. The fountain flowed because it was a fountain, and the nature of a fountain is to flow. Of course I describe what appeared. Doubtless Mr. Spurgeon had his subjective experiences of mental obstruction; but his frank, manly, womanly way was to make his hearers confidants of his moods, by telling them outright when his chariot wheels were driving heavily. No speaker was ever more sure of the sympathy of his hearers.

Perfect mastery of his own system of doctrine was another secret of Mr. Spurgeon's power. Perfect mastery of it and perfect conviction of its truth went hand in hand together with him. He never stood before his hearers like a reed shaken with the wind. He stood solid on the rock, with the whole balanced weight of his great personality.

The doctrine itself that he taught had the immense advantage of being a doctrine that could easily be made intelligible to average minds. And average minds composed the audience to which Mr. Spurgeon addressed himself. The character of mediocrity wrote itself legibly, unmistakably, over the aspect of the Tabernacle congregation. I say this to Mr. Spurgeon's praise. His church was essentially a mission church occupying mission ground. All the unequaled influence as a minister of the Gospel that Mr. Spurgeon attained, he attained, let this be forever remembered to his honor, in the service of a church made up of "not many wise, not many noble." What his preaching did was to present to such hearers the one unchanging Gospel of Christ, in countless changes of form each perfectly level to the comprehension of all. He turned and turned the kaleidoscope of the sermon, and exhibited to his hearers,

never weary of beholding, the same precious truth over and over again, Sunday after Sunday, in displays that had nothing new to recommend them but the endlessly new combinations of things old that the magic of the preacher could produce. If the same combinations even were sometimes repeated, that did not make the pleasure of seeing them pall in the least upon the appetite of the beholders. The achievement was magnificent, of a magnificent aim — to preach the Gospel to the poor.

It would be a capital omission not to make note of the blithe humor that enlivened the earnest temperament of Mr. Spurgeon, and broadened and quickened his touch with the people. This, and an instantaneous alertness of mind in him that served every useful purpose of wit, stood him many a time in good stead on oratoric occasions. These two qualities of his subsisted in a noble basis of Saxon common sense, and, together with that, saved him remarkably, throughout his life, from serious practical errors.

The fundamental attribute, alike of his talent and of his character, was a magnanimous simplicity. His conduct and his speech were uniformly such as seemed comportable with the straightforwardness, the honor, the sense of personal responsibility, proper to a Christian gentleman.

Have I seemed to intimate that Mr. Spurgeon was not distinctively a thinker — or "Thinker," spelled with a capital T? Well, distinctively, or at least preeminently, he was not; but his was a mind prodigiously active, prodigiously alert, nevertheless. He had the fact, if not the form, of culture. This he had by heredity; for he came of a race of preachers. The instinct, the capacity, to know flowed in his blood. What others had to study for, was, in many instances, Spurgeon's by the munificent gift of nature. He, by intuition, knew at once much that his fellows were obliged through tuition laboriously to learn. Still, I shall not disguise the fact that for my own individual contentment of mind, and even of heart, Mr. Spurgeon's ordinary sermons were too much the product of facility rather than

thought. But I dare not, after all, decide quite positively that I should think it better done on his part, if he had diverted his mind from other occupation to bestow more labor of thought on his sermons. As it was, he certainly tasked himself enough; to have tasked himself differently, who in the presence of an accomplished life so free from tare and tret as was Mr. Spurgeon's, would venture to say that that would assuredly have been wiser?

And consider what was Mr. Spurgeon's case. Not twenty years of age, and, from that stage of untrained, or not thoroughly-trained youth, on to the end at fifty-seven, plunged, with never an emersion for free breath, in the ever-increasing sea of the largest and the most responsible Christian pastorship in the world, not to speak of the manifold other cares that he put his Atlantean shoulders under! Would it not be fatuity itself to demand of such a man, so placed, the graces, the amenities, the elegances, of the leisurely scholar, the profundities of the recluse thinker?

Take him for what he was, and not measure him against what is no standard for such as he, and where is the man left to die that will carry more light, more warmth, more life, as of a sun, out of the world in going from it, than went hence last Saturday night with the passing of Charles Haddon Spurgeon?

VIII

HENRY PARRY LIDDON

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE criticism following was written in London — with enjoyment therefore of access to necessary sources of information respecting the subject treated, and in the midst of an atmosphere full of Canon Liddon's personal tradition and fame. The effect of the environment will perhaps be felt by sensitive readers, diffused throughout the text of the paper. I am bound to say that the remarks at the opening about the unfavorable, almost defeating, influence on preaching, of the architectural conditions supplied in the Cathedral of St. Paul's, called out some response in the way of objection rather than of confirmation and support. I leave standing nevertheless what I said, because I believe it to be true, true indeed from the very necessities of the case. The reader, however, furnished with the foregoing hint of contrary view, may, whether more assisted or more confused by these cross-lights thrown on the point, choose his opinion, or decide not to have any opinion, as shall seem to him good.

In revising this paper, I renew with pleasure the satisfaction I experienced when I wrote it, in contact with the noble spirit which I felt throbbing joyously and powerfully throughout Canon Liddon's printed production. It will be a true service that I shall have done any minister of Christ whom I may induce to make the acquaintance of this stalwart, heroical defender of the faith.

It is very interesting to note the fine sympathy — faithfully discriminative sympathy — exercised by Mr. Spurgeon toward a man so far removed from himself by his ecclesiasticism as was Canon Liddon. In Mr. Spurgeon's monthly,

"The Sword and the Trowel," under the title, "Canon Liddon's Witness concerning the Down-Grade," I find the following — with a foot-note, which I print here as preface to the extract:

"Extract from a sermon preached by the late Canon Liddon, at St. Paul's Cathedral, December 22, 1889. Differing as we did from him in his High Church opinions, we could not but admire his zeal for the great verities of the gospel, and his fervent love to our Lord Jesus Christ. He was ever on the side of faith, and was not a teacher of doubt, as too many are in these days:

"Instead of attempting to coerce human souls into conversion, the men of our day take great trouble to explain that conversion involves very little — only a very few new convictions, only a very slight change of life. We dwell at great length on that. Exaggerating the amount of truth to be found in heathen religions, we attenuate, as far as we can, the distinctive truths of the religion of Christ. The sterner sayings of our Lord are thrown into the background, or are explained away. God is presented as an easy-going benevolence, with no tangible quality of justice belonging to him; sin is resolved into natural mistake, or into an imperfect form of virtue; the atonement into a higher kind of sympathy; the action of the Holy Spirit into an indefinite impulse towards good; the sacraments into graceful symbols of spiritual processes which may or may not take place within us; the Bible into a book of the highest interest, but not to be trusted as a depository of absolute truth. The definiteness, the severity, the awe, the mysteriousness of *the old creed of Christendom disappears* in this new presentation of it; and with this — let us be sure of it — there also disappears the unveiling of an infinite love, and the putting forth of an irresistible attraction. After all, *what has this attenuated Christianity to say to the heathen?* If a man should have the heart to become a missionary on behalf of *so thin a creed as this,* it may be predicted that he will not do very much for the men to whom he addresses himself; for the heart of heathendom would say to him: *'If this be all that you have to bring us, why approach us at all? Why not stay at home, and leave us to make the best we can of our own twilight, without being distracted by yours?'"*

How entirely after Spurgeon's own heart such a vital

expression as that from the High-churchman Liddon! What wonder that Baptist editor Spurgeon quoted it in his monthly with delight!

HENRY PARRY LIDDON

Henry Parry Liddon presents the half pathetic case of a man, in some important respects well endowed to be a great preacher, pitting himself heroically against hostile circumstance and — not failing, but not splendidly succeeding. For, comparatively eloquent and comparatively famous for eloquence though Canon Liddon undoubtedly was, he fell below the mark that by merit was properly his, both in the degree, and in the renown of the degree, that as pulpit orator he achieved. St. Paul's Cathedral was too much for him; as it will always be, since it *must* always be, too much for any man that tries to produce in it the just effect of preaching. Three-quarters of Liddon's never excessive physical force was absorbed and lost in the exhausting effort to overcome the pitilessly adverse conditions of the place, and merely and barely get himself heard by his audience — if audience can fairly be called an unorganized multitude of people disposed and dispersed as people must be in that vast edifice resplendent for show and fatal for oratory. It was a cruel altar, however richly decorated, on which to sacrifice such precious gifts, gifts always so rare, as were Canon Liddon's.

The present writer thus speaks, not from personal observation of Canon Lidden preaching in St. Paul's. The privilege of such observation he never enjoyed. But he speaks with the utmost confidence nevertheless. He has seen the place, and he has heard, sometimes rather has failed to hear, sermons preached in it. Besides this, intelligent sympathetic report of the physical cost at which Canon Liddon did his preaching there, satisfies him that he keeps within bounds in estimating at three-fourths the waste of power exacted by the relentless spirit of the spot, from

that eminent preacher, before he was permitted to enjoy in any faintest degree, the orator's necessary privilege of feeling that his words were taking effect. I quote in confirmation a passage of description, which will be felt to constitute its own sufficient accreditment, from an anonymous observer writing in the "British Weekly" newspaper:

"One Sunday I sauntered into the cathedral an hour too soon, and seated myself within six yards of the pulpit. Before Dr. Liddon had spoken three sentences I saw that he was making a tremendous effort. Every sentence, clause, word, was hurled as from a catapult across the vast void above the countless faces below; and the preacher's ear and eye were alike strained to catch whether each word hit the point in the distance on which both eye and ear were bent. So it began, and so it continued during the sermon, and during the whole the muscles of the orator's face as well as his body were working like cordage, till the dark features were bathed in pitiless perspiration. The sermon was a fine one, and labor was no doubt partly imaginative and moral. But that it was chiefly the mere physical exertion necessary to make himself heard, seemed to me to be proved by one thing. He read every word; but again and again, with the manuscript before him, he made obvious blunders in grammar — blunders which a schoolboy could correct, but which the great preacher never noticed. He was like a man working a park of artillery on the actual battle-field — too immersed in hurling his words across the vast intervening space to notice what the projectiles consisted of, or how they were chained together."

The destiny was a cruel one, but Canon Liddon's destiny it was, and, in necessary result, it is with a pulpit orator, not defeated indeed, but not overwhelmingly triumphant, that we have in this paper to deal.

Yet almost it ought to be reckoned overwhelmingly triumphant in oratory, not to be disastrously defeated, if you have to achieve your result by preaching in St. Paul's Cathedral. It is not simply that your audience is broken from its mass as a whole into several instalments of audience; not

simply that the immense dome, lofty as well as large like a sky, seems to make the voice volatile and dissipate it in the upper air; not simply that angles and arches and pillars intercept and shatter your words. This would be bad enough, but besides all this, there is a multiplex murmurous echo which, refracted around the angles, running under the arches, and reflected from the pillars, retreats in a prolonged low multitudinous diminuendo, to vanish from the ear which tries to follow *that,* in the remote recesses of the building. Meantime the ear that tries to follow the voice of the speaker instead, can hardly well define the sound from the perplexed polyglot penumbra of echo that incessantly mocks and confuses it.

It was mainly by preaching under such conditions as have thus been inadequately described, that Canon Liddon became the celebrated preacher that during so many years he was; for he preached mainly in the Cathedral of St. Paul's. Let us boldly say, then, that after all he triumphed overwhelmingly, that he did achieve a resplendent success.

Mainly, I say, by preaching in St. Paul's Cathedral; but by no means exclusively in that way. For Canon Liddon was, one memorable season — a season made memorable by his own memorable exploit — Bampton lecturer before the University of Oxford. He then — it was in 1886 — delivered a series of lectures, eight in number, which, together with an appendix of notes accompanying them when they were published, and with elaborate indexes to their contents, make up a solid volume of five hundred and eighty-four compact and ample pages. The subject chosen by the lecturer from among those prescribed by the founder of the lectureship, was "The Divinity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." The lectures, taken together, constitute what it is probably no exaggeration to pronounce the most exhaustive and satisfactory treatment of their subject existing in any language. They are learned, quite sufficiently so; they are, to almost the last degree, logical; they are luminous in arrangement; they are as lucid in

style as their tendency to long and elaborate sentences, periodic in structure, permitted them to be; they are remarkably alert in anticipative attention to every conceivable phase of doubt and objection respecting the soundness of their argument; they live and throb with blood-red personal conviction and earnestness on the part of the author, and they rise in numerous passages to the height and majesty of a really commanding eloquence. They are conceived and written in both the form and the spirit of sermons, each lecture having a text, which is not treated as a mere motto, a disregarded point of departure, for the discussion introduced, but which affects vitally, as a text should do, the development of the discourse ostensibly drawn from it. In other words, lectures tho they are called, and lectures tho they properly are, they are, in most essential respects, sermons too, sermons of an academic or university class. These Bampton lectures must always continue to be, as they have been in the past, the sheet-anchor to Canon Liddon's fame. They represent him not only at his intellectual, but also at his moral and spiritual, highest and best. Higher and better, in the way of homiletic production, the Church of England of the nineteenth century would call over the muster-roll of her clergy in vain to show. It would be fair, therefore, to Canon Liddon himself, as it could not fail to be profitable to the readers of this paper, if his famous Bampton lectures should be drawn upon here to furnish, in large part, examples and illustrations of his quality.

More in keeping, however, with the general character and aim of the present series of papers, will be a preference of some of Liddon's sermons proper, for particular examination. Let us, then, turn our attention to the remarkable cycles of discourses which he preached and published as occupant of the pulpit of St. Paul's. Of these sermons, none probably will better repay examination than those of the two series entitled "Easter Sermons." These, as published, are noted on the title-page, "Sermons Bearing

Chiefly on the Resurrection of our Lord." This subject was a favorite one with Canon Liddon. He had the sagacity to see, the instinct to feel, that the resurrection of Christ is the keystone to Christianity, as it is the *crux,* becoming such daily more and more, the baffling, the unmanageable, *crux* of current skeptical theologic thought.

Our object, let us remind ourselves in prosecuting the present study, will be not simply to praise, but fairly to appraise. Before entrance on the particular examination proposed, it may be profitable to premise some analysis of Canon Liddon's rich and potent personality as displayed in his preaching.

In the first place, this eminent preacher, with all his great merits, was not a supreme master of style. His value is the value of substance rather than of form, rather even than of substance and form indivisibly blended. It is with sincere reluctance that I thus express myself, for I know that such a judgment, sustained, rules Canon Liddon out from among the great classics of literature — of literature, that is to say, considered as literature. Of course, I cannot mean that Canon Liddon did not write well, that he did not write very well. What I mean is that his style, tho good, tho very good, has yet little or nothing of that last felicity, that nameless charm, in expression, which makes the reading of an author a delight, irrespectively almost of the things that he may choose to say. You could not justly apply to Canon Liddon the classic praise, "He touched nothing that he did not adorn." He would never, however historically placed, have made such a writer as Cicero. But he would easily, under the right conditions of time and place, have made an Augustine, or, better still, an Athanasius. A man of practical genius he may be admitted to have been; but he was not a man of literary genius, in the transcendent sense of that expression, not a man of genius as Jeremy Taylor, or even as Robert South was a man of genius, or, to come nearer his own time, as Robert Hall was a man of genius. Canon Liddon was a man rather of

a noble talent nobly employed, that is, employed with noble conscience, noble aim, noble industry. His preeminence lies less in his gifts than in his use of his gifts. All the more inspiring and more helpful for this very reason his example may be. Each one of us may legitimately feel, if this was possible to him because he was faithful rather than because he was great, something like this may be possible also to me, if without greatness I practice a faithfulness like his.

Approaching our task of examination with expectation thus justly moderated somewhat, and therefore the less liable to a reaction of disappointment needlessly injurious to Canon Liddon's merit and fame, we may expect to meet in his work great excellences offset with certain minor defects; which two contrasted attributes of his, fairly counterweighed, will be found to leave a weighty balance in his favor.

To me quite the sovereign thing in Canon Liddon's endowment from nature, was his moral courage. I experience few contacts in late literature that give me a more invigorating, more inspiring, more ennobling reaction, to the very quick of my moral being, than does Canon Liddon. He was a man of manhood all compact. There was not a dissolute, effeminate, fibre in him. A chain is truly said to be no stronger than it is at its weakest link. A man is no stronger than he is at his weakest point. But there was no weak point in Liddon. He was as strong everywhere as he was anywhere. His convictions were strong because he was strong. They were strong by the whole strength of the man who held them, or who was held by them. But a holding does not represent the relation that existed between Canon Liddon and his convictions. There never, in his case, could have been anything like a strain or tension felt from the man to his convictions, or from his convictions to the man. They did not *hold* the one the other. They *were* the one the other.

Does some one ask wonderingly what ground exists for

making so much of this claim on behalf of Canon Liddon? He was never a martyr, was he, and never in danger of being a martyr? How was he tried that he could show himself to be indeed of such stuff as you say? I answer, there were, I believe, crises, real crises, in Canon Liddon's experience as clergyman of the Church of England, in which his moral courage had signal opportunity to display itself. But of these I will not speak, for I need not; and, besides, this paper is in no sense a criticism of the man, Canon Liddon, except as the man was a preacher. Let us cling closely to our true topic, which is Canon Liddon as a preacher. But Canon Liddon as a preacher was a man of moral courage nothing less than magnificent.

Before illustrating and confirming what I mean in saying this, I need to point out another admirable feature very closely allied to moral courage, yet distinct from that, in Canon Liddon's equipment as a preacher. He was a man not simply of profound convictions — his native character forbade his being other than that — but a man of profound *religious* convictions. He was even more and better than what is thus described. Though far removed from being a mystic, and equally far removed from being a sentimentalist, he was, toward the person of Jesus Christ, a loyal, reverent, affectionate, hero-worshiper like the great apostle Paul. His religious convictions were first of the head, intelligent, reasoned, fortified impregnably, and then they were taken up by the heart and transformed into personal affection, both vivid and constant. Canon Liddon's religion was at bottom a perfectly sane, but at the same time a completely overmastering, sentiment of personal love to Jesus Christ. His moral courage in the pulpit was the courage of such conviction transformed into such emotion. He was never in any presence ashamed of Christ. He not only never denied his Lord, but his voice never faltered a note in confessing his Lord. He believed too profoundly, he loved too intensely.

Now let it not be imagined that for Canon Liddon, placed

as he was, it required less than a moral courage of magnificent temper to be as steady in supreme loyalty to Christ as he invariably abode. It is to be remembered that this great preacher was a scholar among scholars, a thinker among thinkers. He was naturally, and by long habit, a University man. He never married, and he loved the life of a student. He did not enter into the common experience of his fellow-men as he would have done had he yielded his celibate condition and centred himself amid domestic ties in a home of his own. He was fond of those cenobite relations with persons of his own sex, which, among English Protestants, are best found in the communities of scholars at a great university seat like Oxford. But, in such an environment as that, in such an age as our own, the scholar and the thinker is sure to encounter, in its most tremendous aspect, that formidable, that awe-inspiring, that brow-beating spectre of the cultivated imagination, the Spirit of the Time. And the Spirit of the Time is a spectre whose ineffable menace is directed, now, especially against simple, old-fashioned, unbated faith in Jesus Christ as declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead. Be a scholar among scholars, a thinker among thinkers, as Canon Liddon was, and still keep that faith, if you can, unsophisticated and whole, like the faith of a little child. The Spirit of the Time will loom to the sky before you; will lean, an unescapable imminence, over you, and will seem with a frown to say, What art thou, so small, to withstand ME, the Spirit of the Time? But Canon Liddon towered as tall as the Spirit of the Time, and met it with an equal eye. He seemed naturally and irrepressibly to dilate with the feeling, "Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world."

I have thus expressed myself, I suppose, with quite sufficient sympathetic enthusiasm. I have indulged my instinctive bent in doing so. I am conscious of an exhilarating delight in approving and applauding a moral courage like that which I have attributed to Canon Liddon. Ought I to check

myself? Is there a just and necessary qualification to be applied to Liddon's merit at this point? Perhaps so. Perhaps his magnificent virtue of moral courage was not altogether, not *quite* altogether, the virtue of the exposed and single adventurous soldier of the truth. Probably it was in part — in some part, however small the part — an individual expression only of an *esprit de corps,* that is, of a sentiment supporting itself in each member of a community by the consciousness of its being participated by all.

For — and now I mention a distinct and noteworthy, a very influential, element in Canon Liddon's character as clergyman and as preacher — he was a highly ecclesiastical spirit, ecclesiastical as distinguished from, and additional to, simply Christian and scriptural. To say that he belonged to the "High Church" party in the English Establishment would not be an untrue, but it would be an inadequate, statement of the fact. Liddon was too large a man, not to say too devoted a Christian, to be absorbed in the mint, anise and cummin of Ritualism. He undoubtedly gave strength, by giving, through imputable adhesion, intellectual standing, to that section of the English Church, who, holding high ecclesiastical doctrines, expend their zeal in publishing those doctrines through elaborate visible forms. Nothing, however, of this small, tithing spirit found lodgment in Liddon. You would, I believe, search his sermons in vain for one hint that he was, in any such sense, in any degree whatever, a ritualist. But, on the other hand, all his sermons, or almost all, yield evidence that he was a thoroughgoing, a severe, an uncompromising ecclesiasticist. "The Church" to him was as much, almost as much, as it is to the most resolute Roman Catholic. And "The Church" for him was not simply the Church of England. Again, neither was it the great, collective, ideal assembly, made up of all true believers of all ages and races. It was a very definite, a strictly limited, outwardly visible whole, consisting apparently of three, and only three parts, to wit (presumably), the Roman Church, the Greek Church, and

the English Church. The sects or denominations of Christians, however numerous their membership, and however sound in the great essentials their faith, are conscientiously, and this not silently, but expressly, excluded by Liddon from account. Such is the sense I gather from utterances of Liddon's like the following:

"And how, *relatively*, slight are the differences which separate the three branches of the Church from each other, *nay, even the Church herself from most of the voluntary and self-organized communities of Christians around her.*" ("University Sermons," "The Law of Progress.")

The italics here, in the latter of the two cases, are my own. Observe how little offensive in statement, a view so unalterably offensive in fact, becomes, proceeding from Liddon's tongue and pen. We outsiders are recognized as "Christians," although we are schismatically "self-organized" in "communities" not of "The Church." Nay, the "differences" that separate us from "The Church" are "*relatively* slight." The italics now are the conscientious Canon's own. It will not escape the consideration of thoughtful minds what an heroic exclusion — heroic in point of numbers concerned, and even in some cases in point of imposing ecclesiastic pretension — is effected by the implication of Canon Liddon's words. Not only are excluded the multitudes of "self-organizing" Christians in America, in the British Isles, and elsewhere throughout the world, but equally the State churches, too, of Protestant Continental Europe, not excepting the Reformed Church of France, historically so reverend, and so dear in the eyes of another great ecclesiasticist, the eminent French preacher, Eugène Bersier.

The foregoing expression of Liddon's is not a chance expression that might misrepresent the real, the permanent, conviction of the author. On the contrary, it is a considerate, a cautious, a guarded, expression. It truly represents the profound habitual state of Liddon's mind on the mat-

ter involved. In a note to the Bampton Lectures, in due course published after their oral delivery, the lecturer, replying to a critic, uses this language:

"If the Lecturer had learnt from the Church of England that 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation,' he had also learnt from her that the Church 'hath authority in controversies of faith.' . . . The Christian Revelation was in fact committed, not only to the pages of a Sacred Book, but to the guardianship of a Sacred Society, and the second factor can just as little be dispensed with as the first."

Now consider what "The Church" is in Liddon's view; consider that it is by no means identical with the aggregate number, collected into one conception, of all true Christian believers of whatever name; that it is a definite, limited, exclusive body, made up threefold of communicants of the Church of England, communicants of the Greek Church, and communicants of the Roman Church; that, therefore, a sentence pronounced by "The Church" does not mean merely the general verdict of the "Christian consciousness," regarded as a probable guide to truth in Christian doctrine, but means formal decrees of councils, that is, of ecclesiastical hierarchs speaking with the voice of authority, with the voice of an authority that "can just as little be dispensed with" as the authority of Scripture — consider maturely all this, and you have in your mind a fair measure of the degree to which Canon Liddon's churchmanship, his ecclesiasticism, his sacerdotal spirit, proceeded. This temper, in fact, stopped little short in him of outright conformity to the temper of Roman Catholicism. It was only, as it were, by a happy inconsistency of logic, that he failed to be in fact a Roman Catholic priest. No wonder if he were indeed overmatched, as some thought that he was, in his controversy conducted in the columns of the London "Times" newspaper with that adroit Roman Catholic propagandist, Monsignor Capel. It was the incurable weakness of his ecclesiastical position

that exposed him to defeat — that, and no inferiority, on his part, of strength or of skill.

Yes, Canon Liddon's admirable moral courage was, in some part, other than the unsupported heroism of the individual man; it was also the spirit in him of a class, the class holding with him "high church" views. He felt himself backed not merely by the intrinsic strength of the truth that he stood for, but also by the intrinsic strength of "The Church."

To the "Church," on which thus he leaned for support, the "Church," whose cause, sincerely identified in his mind with the cause of truth, he unflinchingly asserted against whatever assault — to this "Church" Canon Liddon paid ever a certain proud, self-respecting, but profound, and in effect unqualified, obeisance. He was as obedient in intimate spirit as was Cardinal Newman, with whom obedience to ecclesiastical superiority was fairly a passion. But the fashion of Liddon's obedience was different from the fashion of Newman's. You could imagine Liddon a Roman Catholic priest, but you could hardly imagine him, even in this character, using, with reference to one sole fellow-man, though that fellow-man were the Pope, language like the following, publicly used by Cardinal Newman, and by him used not simply once, in a moment of high-wrought excitement, but a second time after a long interval following the first, and then on an occasion when what would have been his own private judgment in a capital matter had just been most humiliatingly crossed by the spiritual tribunal to which he felt himself bound to bow:

"Deeply do I feel, ever will I protest, *for I can appeal to the ample testimony of history to bear me out,* that in questions of right or wrong there is nothing really strong in the whole world, nothing decisive and operative, but the voice of him to whom have been committed the keys of the kingdom and the oversight of Christ's flock. That voice is now, as ever it has been, a real authority, infallible when it teaches, prosperous when it commands, ever taking the lead wisely and distinctly in

its own province, adding certainty to what is probable and persuasion to what is certain. Before it speaks, the most saintly may mistake; and after it has spoken the most gifted must obey. . . . If there ever was a power on earth who had an eye for the times, who has confined himself to the practicable, and has been happy in his anticipations, whose words have been deeds, and whose commands prophecies, such is he, in the history of ages, who sits on from generation to generation in the chair of the Apostles as the Vicar of Christ and the Doctor of His Church." ("Cardinal Newman," by John Oldcastle, pp. 56, 57.)

The foregoing language, truly remarkable from a nineteenth-century Englishman, was recalled and reprinted (with italics as shown above) by Cardinal Newman himself in 1872, soon after the last great council of the Roman Catholic Church, in the course of a letter to "The Guardian" newspaper; it had first appeared in his "Discourses on University Education," delivered in 1852.

One easily represents to one's self the secret, subtle delight of self-effacing humility with which John Henry Newman would perform an act of intellectual and moral prostration, not to say abasement, like that. Such a trait of behavior was thoroughly characteristic of the man that one like him would necessarily become in becoming Roman Catholic. Widely otherwise with Henry Parry Liddon. Absolute self-obliteration before a single fellow-creature would not seem a thing in character for him to enact. Him it would be much easier to imagine, for example, in the historic place of the intrepid Ambrose, enforcing that exemplary submission and penitence on the offending Emperor Theodosius. Liddon was capable of far greater personal gentleness than was the relentless antagonist of Fénelon, but, in instinctive feeling of ecclesiastical office, he was a ruling pontiff like Bossuet.

Have I made the impression on readers of an unengaging, perhaps repellent, personality in Liddon? Then I must make haste to correct the impression. Canon Liddon was

the sincerest, the most loyal, of Christians; he was the most earnest, the most evangelical, of preachers. He was this in essence and to the core of his being,— always under the form and expression of a churchman, a priest. Seeing a fine "dissenting chapel" once, in an environment of obscure dwellings, he said: "Only the love of Christ could have done that." There spoke the affectionate heart of the Christian, out from under the garb of the priest. It is not so much the liberal human sympathy expressed in the remark, that should arrest our attention, as it is the sentiment of personal affection toward Christ. There are even tears, hidden, irrepressible tears, of pathos and of love in the words.

Evangelical — printing the word without quotation marks, for, from being of the "evangelical" party he was far enough removed — I pronounce Canon Liddon as preacher. Not only did he not obliterate the preaching office with the overlying forms and ceremonies of the priestly, but he was very impatient of those who preached in the pulpit anything short of the saving gospel of Christ. He did not shrink from using the old-fashioned gospel terms, but he used them with a meaning that filled them full — terms, which, in use that empties them of their original meaning, have been justly ridiculed as cant. Hear him, talking to a university audience at Oxford, describe the sort of minister that the minister of the gospel should *not be;* for my own part, I am not able not to think of the late Dean Stanley, as I read:

"His thought will drift naturally away from the central and most solemn truths to the literary embellishments which surround the faith; he will toy with questions of geography, or history, or custom, or scene, or dress; he will reproduce, with vivid power, the personages and events of long past ages, and this, it may be, with the talent of a master artist; he will give to the human side of religion the best of his time and of his toil, and in doing this, he may, after the world's measure, be doing good work. But let us not deceive ourselves; he will not be saving souls. Souls are saved by men who themselves count all things

but dung, that they may win Christ, and be found in Him; and who, even if they be men of refined taste, and of cultivated intellect, know well how to subordinate the embellishments of truth to its vital and soul-subduing certainties."

The utterer of these words, for all that he was in grain the priest that I have described him, was not less also, perhaps was even more also, the called, the consecrated, the apostolic, preacher of the gospel. Liddon was, in base of character, preacher. This base of character in him was simply penetrated and modified, by no means overcome and cancelled, by the quality of priest. It was fit, therefore, that his career should be, as it was, preeminently a career of the pulpit. No doubt, he would have made an admirable bishop, but admirable bishops are perhaps more plenty, and perhaps less needed, than admirable preachers. Still, it will naturally strike thoughtful readers as curious, that so marked a man and so loyal a son of the Church should not have been singled out for high ecclesiastical preferment. The truth seems to be, that, paradoxically, his very fitness for rule stood in the way of his becoming a ruler. It is authentically, I believe, related that, having once to preach before the Queen of England, he ventured on the freedom of addressing some part of his discourse directly to her. He was perhaps consciously following classic example found by him in the great seventeenth-century preachers of France, of whom he was an admiring and assiduous student: by the way, his habit of dividing his printed sermons, after the French manner, into parts, marked in the middle of the page with Roman numerals, is probably a note of this. Louis XIV. was equal to accepting such personal appeal from his preachers as a compliment, but Victoria, it is said, resented it from Liddon. As the Queen of England is, by virtue of her queenly office, also Head of the English Church, Canon Liddon had cut off from himself the stream of ecclesiastical promotion at the very source from which it springs.

I have thus set forth those characteristics belonging to

the man which seem to me to have most profoundly and most vitally affected Canon Liddon's quality as preacher. I need to add explicitly what has been already implied, that he augmented the power which was naturally his by the most sedulous self-culture and by wide-ranging scholarship.

As to the method by which he did his pulpit work, his master secret lay in the element of opportuneness. He was an alert and sagacious student of the signs of the times in which he lived. He took advantage of current incidents that attracted public attention, and made them help him preach the gospel. It is hardly too much to say that, if he had not, by his habit of doing this, kept people always in the uncertain expectation of hearing from him something fresh on living topics, he could not, with those somewhat closely-reasoned, thoughtful sermons of his, have continued to command the large popular audiences that he did. But, apart from such immediately and strikingly recognizable allusions to things of the moment, there was also a deeper, and a more difficult, as well as a more truly useful, element of opportuneness omnipresent in Canon Liddon's discourses. These were emphatically, and in the best sense of the expression, sermons for the times. They fought the battle, not of yesterday, but of to-day. They saw the true strategic point, and made for it. They sought to master, and to keep, the key of the position. Everything was done as in the immediate presence of the foe. The flank was guarded, the rear was covered, the front was serried impenetrably hard. The column was ever in the act of "insupportably advancing."

What I mean by my military parable is, that Canon Liddon constantly preached in the consciousness of the particular phase of religious doubt or of religious hostility surrounding him. He addressed himself to the state of mind actually existing among thoughtful persons who might be as yet unconvinced of the truth of Christianity, or who might, under the influence of the spirit rife in the modern air, be wavering in their faith. He preached as mindful

of many who, not hearers of the sermon, would be readers of it in print. Hence resulted a blended quality of homily and of apologetic in Liddon's preaching. Seldom has academic preaching been so popular, or popular preaching been so academic, as was his. The character that I have now been noting in Liddon's discourses makes them admirable subjects of study for preachers, both as models in method with respect to opportuneness (of the more occult and subtle, and therefore the more difficult, kind), and as means of informing themselves accurately what the last aspect of critical skepticism is, and, not less important certainly, how that last aspect, thus ascertained, is best, that is, most effectively, most victoriously, met.

It seemed desirable to be somewhat full, as I have sought to be, in setting forth the general distinguishing traits of Canon Liddon's pulpit work, even at the cost, very regrettable, of having scant space left in which to display him by illustrative examples. Before bringing forward any of these, I may I trust without offense, under the just reducing effect of the high praise that I have felt bound to accord to him, frankly point out now, in brief, some of the minor faults that fair criticism must offset to his merits.

The fault of over-long elaborate periods is perhaps not justly chargeable against Canon Liddon's sermons in general, but in his Bampton Lectures he certainly not seldom commits it. Even there, however, it simply makes needlessly heavy his style, without really obscuring his thought. His thought is almost invariably clear, and his expression, almost invariably, well exhibits his thought. Almost invariably, I say. Rarely, very rarely, an exception occurs, even in the well-wrought texture of the Bampton Lectures. For example (p. 127): "For these and other reasons, modern unbelief, altho formidable, will not be deemed so full of menace to the future of the Kingdom of our Lord as may sometimes be apprehended by the nervous timidity of Christian piety." "*Will* not be deemed" "so full of menace" as, nevertheless, "sometimes" it "*may*" be deemed!—ex-

pression negligent to the point of futility; but the negligent expression is strictly answerable to negligent thought.

More frequent in Liddon than faults like the foregoing are faults in diction and faults in syntax. Not exactly a fault, but an imperfect felicity, in diction is the hybrid (Greek with Latin) compound, "superangelic" for "hyper-angelic." "Every moral being *which*" (instead of "whom" or "that"). "Superadded to and distinct from," "anterior to and independent of," are examples of undesirable usage. Conjunctions or conjunctive adverbs occur without properly grammatical terms of relation; *e. g.*, "the mystery of the Self-sufficing and Blessed Life of God *before* He surrounded Himself," etc. False concord: "When once pious affection or devout imagination *have* seized the reins," etc. Once more, and now a little group of representative faults simply exhibited and left unclassified: "At one while;" "Hallucinated;" "It *would have been* better *to have gone* elsewhere;" "They have every means of verifying its truth or falsehood." A *statement* may be verified, but not the "truth" of a statement; and certainly not its "falsehood."

The minor faults thus exemplified are not numerous enough in Liddon to constitute anything like a striking infestation of his pages. They are, however, such in kind, and to such a degree numerous, as to indicate, not indeed that Liddon did not exercise care in writing, but that he lacked that certain native instinct of felicity in expression, possessing which one may almost dispense with care, and not possessing which one is doomed to exercise care partly in vain. The mere habit of reading aloud as he wrote, or of imaginatively hearing his words pronounced, would have sufficed to prevent his displeasing the ear with repetitions of sound in the same sentence like those indicated with italics in the following citations: "To those persons the Apostle *points* out that, however unconsciously, they are in *point* of fact giving up Christianity altogether;" "they contributed largely to *form* the system of fantastic error which took definite *forms*," etc.; "like a reckless man who rides at *full*

tilt down a street *full* of children at play;" "some persons who would be distressed at the *idea* that they were bad *Christians,* have no *idea at all* of the truth that the *Christian* Revelation, if accepted *at all,* must be accepted as a whole."

All the minor faults hitherto enumerated are such that they might conceivably have been splendidly eclipsed; but there was one central defect in Liddon's equipment which inevitably left him hopelessly short of great mastery in style. He had not sufficient imagination. He could write, for example, of a "*burden* of *fathomless* sorrow." He could write (Bampton Lectures, p. 284) of "*outbursts* [in Paul] *by* which argument suddenly *melts* into *stern* denunciation, or into versatile expostulation, or into irresistible appeals to sympathy, or into the *highest strains* of lyrical poetry." "Argument" here "*melts* by outbursts" into "*stern* denunciation"—"melts" also into the "highest strain of lyrical poetry." That is well thought on Liddon's part, but not well imagined; in fact, not imagined at all. And without imagination there is no such thing as great style.

But without imagination there may be something better than great style. Moral earnestness may be a buoyant force that shall triumphantly bear the subject of it, even without the eagle's wings of imagination, into a region of truly elevated eloquence. This is illustrated in such a passage of Liddon as the following, which I take from the concluding pages of the Bampton Lectures. Closely observant readers will not fail to note how it is the high ecclesiasticist, as well as the devout and confident Christian, that speaks here — with the passing glance cast at threatened disestablishment for the Church of England; how also it is the sentinel and defender, armed and alert, of the faith once for all delivered to the saints that here speaks, and speaks under the vividly perceived imminence of foes to that faith, having nothing less than death for it in their hearts:

"The doctrine of Christ's divinity . . . is at this hour the strength of the Christian Church. There are forces abroad in

the world of thought which, if they could be viewed apart from all that counteracts them, might well make a Christian fear for the future of humanity. It is not merely that the Church is threatened with the loss of possessions secured to her by the reverence of centuries, and of a place of honor which may perhaps have guarded civilization more effectively than it can be shown to have strengthened religion. The Faith has once triumphed without these gifts of Providence; and, if God wills, she can again dispense with them. But never, since the first ages of the Gospel, was fundamental Christian truth denied and denounced so largely, and with such passionate animosity, as is the case at this moment in each of the most civilized nations of Europe. It may be that God has in store for His Church greater trials to her faith than she has yet experienced; it may be that, along with the revived scorn of the old pagan spirit, the persecuting sword of pagan hatred will yet be unsheathed. Be it so, if so He wills it. The holy city is strong in knowing 'that God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed; God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen make much ado, and the kingdoms are moved; but God hath shewed His Voice and the earth shall melt away.' When the waters of human opinion rage and swell, and the mountains shake at the tempest of the same, our Divine Lord is not unequal to the defence of His Name and His Honor. If the sky seem dark and the winds contrary; if ever and anon the strongest intellectual and social currents of our civilization mass themselves threateningly, as if to overwhelm the holy bark as she rides upon the waves; we know Who is with her, unwearied and vigilant, though He should seem to sleep. His presence forbids despondency; His presence assures us that a cause which has consistently conquered in its day of apparent failure, cannot but calmly abide the issue. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

It may seem almost ungracious to find anything whatever not entirely admirable in a passage so admirable upon the whole as the foregoing; but one is irresistibly prompted

to note the unconsciously provincializing effect, making itself felt even here, from Liddon's ecclesiastic quality. How unaware that intellect was, that intellect by nature so clear, but by habit so clouded with ecclesiasticism — how unaware, that at the very moment when the speaker was straining up his courage to say, "The Faith has once triumphed without these gifts of Providence [state subsidies]; and, if God wills, she can again dispense with them"— how unaware, I say, was Liddon then, that, outside of "the Church," indeed, but close under his own eyes, had his eyes but been open to see it, "the Faith" was triumphing in the "self-organized communities of Christians" around him, who, not only *without* the "gifts of Providence" referred to, but in spite of those "gifts" used against them, and in spite of being taxed to help supply, themselves, those "gifts" so used, were holding forth the word of life and standing for the truth of the Gospel! It is a real pity that, under the illusion of possessing catholicity, Liddon should have been really so imperfectly catholic. The unavoidable result is, to affect the value of this strenuous spirit, considered as a champion contending for the true church universal, with a constant coefficient of discount.

The very first discourse in the first volume of Liddon's "Easter Sermons"— there are, as I have intimated, two volumes of these — will furnish a good example for illustration both of his characteristic merit, and of his characteristic fault, in the treatment of a text. The text is, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The preacher wishes to commence at once dealing with the phase of critical disbelief that at the actual moment confronts him. That phase of critical disbelief is denial of the literal resurrection of Jesus, coupled with shallow-cheerful pseudo-philosophical undertaking to show that Christianity can get along very well without this its key-stone fact. Liddon's haste to get to his true point of work leads him unaware to treat his text and its context with unintentional irreverence. He quotes: "But some man

will say, 'How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?'" And then says: "St. Paul answers these questions so far as the occasion required; and he *then* goes on to a point of even graver importance." Now the fact is that Paul, in this great passage of his teaching, pursues just the opposite order; he *first* takes up the "point of even graver importance," and, *after that,* raises and answers the questions quoted by Liddon.

Canon Liddon proceeds to say:

"For these Greeks, in their airy, light-hearted, careless manner, would seem to have suggested that it did not matter very much whether the Resurrection were true or not; that the Resurrection, however interesting, was not the central feature in the Christian creed; that even if man is not to rise hereafter, and if Christ did not rise on the third day from the dead, Christianity has already done, and will yet do, very much for man in this life to subdue and chasten his passions, to sweeten his temper, to make duty welcome and sorrow bearable, and the relations of men with each other kindly and unselfish. These Greek converts, who had as yet so much to learn about Christianity, would suggest that the Resurrection was a matter of merely intellectual interest, lying outside the real, beneficent and moral action of Christianity: so that, even if the Apostle who preached it was wrong, and if they who questioned it were right, there was no reason for discomfort as to the claims or worth of Christianity as a whole. Christianity was really, they thought, independent of the question and would survive it.

"This is the position upon which St. Paul is making war — with which, in fact, he will make no terms whatever. He will not allow that the question of our Lord's Resurrection, and of the general Resurrection, which is attested by it, is for Christianity anything less than vital. It is not that he himself is, after all, only a Jew in Christian guise, who cannot enter into the subtle and delicate analysis to which Greek thought must fain submit all subjects which come before it. It is not that as a keen dialectician he enjoys the intellectual pleasure of forcing men to look their premises in the face; of making them accept unforeseen and possibly unwelcome conclusions to which they had by implication committed themselves. It is that for him Chris-

tianity is bound up with the Resurrection as with a fact inseparable from its existence. He cannot detach Christianity from this truth after the fashion of those off-hand Corinthians; if the Resurrection goes, Christianity goes too; it vanishes in its essence and as a whole. A Christ who did not rise is not the illuminator or the Redeemer of men, and the world is still without deliverance from its darkness and its sin. And a reason for this is that Christianity, as St. Paul thinks of it, is a great venture. It is a venture staked upon the eternal future. It bids men lay out their time, and dispose of their lives, and order their daily action on the supposition,— the tremendous supposition which it treats as certain,— that this life is but a preface, and a very short preface, to another and an endless life that will follow. And the warrant for doing this is that Christ has risen from the dead, and has thus shown us by a demonstration addressed to sense not only or chiefly that Death is not the end, but that he is Lord of the world beyond the grave; that he has the keys of hell and of death. But if this warrant is unsubstantial; if this venture is unwarranted; if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we have indeed made a capital mistake and are of all men most miserable."

In the foregoing, we undoubtedly have an intelligent and vividly graphic portrayal of the aspect presented at the actual moment by the pseudo-Christian, critical skepticism, which so lightly kisses the Lord, and — betrays Him. The whole series of the "Easter Sermons" is, in fact, substantially a discussion, from various points of view, of the vital subject suggested. Nothing could be more opportune — nothing more alive with the life of to-day. So much I fully concede in Liddon's favor. But, on the other hand, how slightly, how slenderly, the introduction of this particular topic is connected with this particular text! The Greeks "*would seem*," etc. How "would seem"? It is not too strong an assertion to assert that there is nothing either in the text, or in the context, to supply the preacher with precisely the subject that he treats. In fact there is nothing in the whole Scripture passage to favor the idea that the Corinthian Christians ever denied, or ever thought of denying, the resurrection of Jesus — much less the idea

that they rationalized in the modern manner about the ease with which Christianity might do without this key-stone fact in its system. On the contrary, Paul begins with pointing out to the Corinthian deniers (not of the past resurrection of Jesus, but of the future resurrection of men) a certain inevitable logical consequence of their denial, a consequence of which apparently they had not thought, namely, that if there were no resurrection of the dead then there had been no resurrection of Jesus. Paul wished to startle them back from their denial of the resurrection of the dead in general, by showing them what that denial involved in the instance of Jesus. His course of argument throughout assumes that the resurrection of Christ was admitted by those to whom he writes; nay, he confidently builds upon this admission on their part, as upon a corner stone, his demonstration to them of the future resurrection of the dead. Thus completely unwarranted is Liddon's "would seem." Dr. Maclaren would not have treated his text in this fashion. Liddon perhaps would not, if he had been, in his habit of thought, as cautiously and obediently scriptural as he was loyally and vigilantly ecclesiastical. A doubt is irresistibly suggested. Does the erection of "The Church" into an authority coordinate and equal with Scripture, inevitably tend toward making Scripture an authority second and subordinate to "The Church"? The fault laid to Liddon's charge at this point does not vitiate the reasoning on his part, independent of the text, that follows. What he goes on to say remains sound and good, so far as it is capable of being severed from relation to the text; *but of such a severance the ideal sermon is not capable.*

In illustration of that easier, more obvious, opportuneness which Liddon wisely and successfully cultivated, take the following allusion found in the same sermon:

"While the hours of last year, 1882, were running out, an event of European importance, as we now know, was taking place. The most powerful man in France was dying. And one

of the first events in this present year upon which the eyes of Europe were fixed was Gambetta's funeral. Everything was done that could be done by a grateful country to give it political importance. The State paid the expenses, and nothing on the same scale of splendor and publicity had been seen in Paris since Morny was buried. And, among other noticeable circumstances in connection with it, *this* was especially noticeable; — that throughout the proceedings, nothing was said or done to imply that man lives after death, or that God, or the religion which binds us to Him, are [is] entitled to notice.

"It could not be but that such a circumstance would command much and anxious attention from Christians, as well as from the opponents of Christianity. The latter, in this country, as elsewhere, insisted upon its significance. It was the first instance, they said, of a total disregard of profession of faith in a future, at the funeral of a European politician of the first rank. Even Robespierre had been eager to proclaim his belief in immortality; and many a man in high position who, like Talleyrand, during life might have repudiated the claims of religion, had welcomed its ministers when on the bed of death, and had been interred amid the words of hope, the prayers, the benedictions, which are so dear to Christians. Of the religious worth of this tardy or posthumous honor to religion, I am not now speaking; Gambetta's funeral may have been, in a terrible sense, sincere. But the significant thing is that such an event should have been possible. It meant a great deal, first and immediately for France, and then, more remotely, for Europe. It showed, that, in our day, on an occasion of national importance, a great people in the heart of Christendom could officially look death in the face, and ignore everything that follows it."

The citations from Liddon already presented, including the foregoing passage, will sufficiently have shown that his style is, not to say diffuse, at least very full. He does not produce effects by powerful sudden condensations of thought or feeling into vivid brief expression. He is primarily and preeminently a teacher, not an orator.

The first sermon — there are two such — entitled "Christianity without the Resurrection," may be studied as an example of Liddon at his strongest. If an example of him

at his weakest be sought, perhaps the sermon in the same volume entitled "The Power of the Resurrection" might fairly be regarded as supplying it. The title naturally raises expectation to a high pitch — only, however, to make the sermon more decisively disappointing.

On the whole it may be said that the kaleidoscopic variety secured by Liddon in the treatment of his favorite great topic throughout two series of sermons, does not prevent one's experiencing some effect of repetition and monotony as one reads the discourses consecutively. But, with whatever just abatements made, these sermons, and, with these, Liddon's sermons in general, must be pronounced a substantial contribution to permanent homiletical literature.

In fine. Manly, Christian, earnest, brave, loyal to Scripture, yet loyal to "Church" almost more than to Scripture, apostolic, yet hardly less sacerdotal than apostolic, but truly and steadily and devotedly evangelic through all, a scholar and a thinker — such was Liddon the man; and of necessity such, intensely such, was Liddon the preacher — a great pulpit teacher rather than a great pulpit orator, a master of Christian apologetics for his generation, who lacked only the supreme distinction of genius to be a classic in literature, as well as what he indeed was, a pontiff without pontifical place, and a Father of the Church born out of due time.

IX

EUGENE BERSIER

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

It is now something more than forty years ago that I first met Eugène Bersier. I had — very early in active life — gone upon the invalid list, and, utterly prostrate with the added exhaustion of passion for my country in the supreme throe of her agony for continued existence, fled to Europe for respite and rest. The winter of 1861-62 I spent in Paris. I shall never forget how grateful to me were the prayers that I heard from the touched lips of the young pastor of *l'Église Évangelique,* lifted up, Sunday after Sunday, on behalf of my suffering country. That young pastor was Eugène Bersier. I sought a meeting with him to thank him for his thought before God of my native land. I found that he knew something of us Americans by personal acquaintance; for he had been a year or two resident in our country. That circumstance, of course, heightened the vividness of his individual sympathy for the American nation in her hour of trial.

During that whole winter I often, indeed almost regularly, heard M. Bersier preach. I also saw him and heard him, again and again, in the weekly prayer-meetings of his church. He was a noble-looking young man, with a sweet, rich voice that added full weight to the impression of his personal presence. There was a dignity, mingled with a simplicity, in his bearing, a fervor, enkindling a sobriety, in his thought, a force, always admirably within measure, in his utterance, that gave promise of the eminence as preacher in due time to be his. He adapted himself, as the true preacher will, to the capacities and the needs of his hearers; but there was an

elevation, an aspiration, in his discourse, as of instinctive, irrepressible buoyancy toward a level that was higher, that was ideal. You were irresistibly reminded of the standard set by the great classic preachers of France. Here might be a future Bossuet, a future Massillon, mingled, in one man, who then would be a truly greater than either. It was therefore, to me no surprise that Eugène Bersier afterward ran the shining career that he did. It was the only legitimate fulfilment of the auguries with which he set out. Alas, that he touched his goal so soon!

Sixteen years ago, I met him once more. The radiant young man that I remembered had grown to "reverence and the silver hair." But the port was as erect as ever, and there was, in his apparent health and strength, the promise of at least a quarter of a century more of ever-increasing power to be wielded by him for Christ. In reply to my questions, he told me of the volumes of sermons, six or seven in number, that he had published, and alluded, with frank and manly, and perfectly modest, pleasure to the currency they had found, not only in France, but elsewhere in Europe. He presented me a copy of his last volume, enhancing its value by his autograph in it. He also gave me his historical monograph, making a large and handsome book, on Admiral Coligny, that heroic Protestant confessor and martyr, of days which fell so evil for France. I cheered myself silently with the hope that I might soon make return, however inadequate, in kind, for these valued volumes. Death was to be beforehand with me! But I meantime had been doing my best at the books for return, books which were to be — unless death should be otherwise beforehand with me again!

I said to M. Bersier, "How little we thought, when you were sympathizing so affectionately with us, in our national troubles, that the hour of France to suffer, even worse than we, was so near!" "Yes; in eight years was to come our

struggle with Germany. That we could bear; for, to every nation sooner or later arrives its time of defeat. But the Commune,— that was dreadful indeed; for in that we were destroying ourselves,— we were committing the crime and the folly of suicide. During the siege of Paris, our straits were extreme, both from danger and from lack of food. It was a red-letter day at my house, during the time of the worst with the city, when we could get a rat for our table. Bombs from the enemy's guns fell everywhere about us. One fell into my own study. But all this terror and famine were as nothing compared with the shame and horror of the Commune!"

I had read such things; I knew well that they happened; but hearing them on the spot, from the lips of a personal sufferer, gave a living sense of reality such as I had never experienced before. But it was almost impossible, after all, to conceive the truth. That a refined and cultivated gentleman, a man with distinction marked so legibly in his very person and manner, that such a man as I saw before me, had actually, there, in the "high capital" itself of luxury, been reduced to the extremity of rejoicing in a ragout of rat for his dinner,— well, I had to believe it, but I could not conceive it!

Of the volume of sermons which I brought away as a souvenir of that interview, I may testify without reserve that purer gold of thought better beaten into perfect expression, I should not know where to look for in any volume of sermons. It has been in my way to make some study of Bossuet, of Massillon, of Bourdaloue, and of Saurin, and I can truly say that, in summary of merit, the average sermon of Bersier need not fear a comparison with the average sermon of any one of those masters of pulpit eloquence. If William Jay was justified in learning French, as I believe he did learn it, that he might read the great seventeenth-century

preachers of France in the language in which they spoke, any minister, I may boldly say it, with aptitude for mastering languages, who has not already mastered French, would be justified, and still more amply, in learning French that he might read the sermons of Eugène Bersier; for, besides being sermons of the highest class as to literary and oratorical form, they discuss the living questions of to-day with masterly strength, and to an issue in accordance with the simplicity that is in Christ.

EUGÈNE BERSIER

If a Greek critic of the Attic prime, supposed living again among us moderns, should, merely from the point of view of oratoric art, compare the achievements in pulpit eloquence of the various races of mankind, it would no doubt be to French preachers that he would award the palm of supremacy. Among those French preachers (of whatever time) such a critic, free from every prepossession, would, I feel sure, find no one superior to the subject of the present paper. Critics less severe and less severely Greek — Asiatic, let us say, rather than Attic — might pronounce a different judgment. A warping influence admitted from an admixture of romanticism in the literary taste, might not unnaturally lead to a preference of something English or of something American over anything French. But to a pure Attic critical sense the French would infallibly seem finer. And of the French, as I said, nothing would seem more free from fault or defect than the eloquence of Eugène Bersier.

It is thus a very high, but it is also a somewhat peculiar, praise that I bestow on this eminent French preacher. I prepare, as far as I may, my readers for considering the claims of a master in pulpit oratory who is contrasted, but rather in quality than in quantity of merit, with all of his peers in the list of illustrious names furnishing subjects for the present series of papers. It is Attic performance that is here to be judged; we must apply Attic canons of art and Attic standards of taste in judging it.

This means, of course, that nothing to strike by eccentricity, extravagance, excess, no indulgence of individual caprice, no lawlessness willing to be mistaken for independence, no sins against taste hoping to pass for audacities

of genius, no violences of expression doing duty for originalities of thought — nothing whatever of this sort need be looked for in Bersier. All with him is measure, proportion, propriety, pure taste, sound judgment, undisturbed dominance of the rule of not too much, order, harmony, power working in obedience to law. In short, Bersier's excellence is of just that rare kind, the irreproachable, the perfect, which, as it is the most difficult to achieve, is likewise the most difficult to display. It is like a sphere that you could not take in your hand to show, because it is too large to grasp, and because it offers no protuberance, no irregularity, upon which you might seize.

I must at once guard myself against being misunderstood to imply that Bersier's excellence is negative merely, or mainly, that it consists in exemption from fault. This is far from being the fact. Bersier was a man of genius, or of a talent approaching to genius. He had passion enough, imagination enough, to have made him successful by sensational oratory — had he not had also taste enough, judgment enough, conscience enough, will enough, to refuse to those qualities the necessary over-indulgence. The result in him of the exquisite balance thus indicated, of qualities mental and moral, was a pulpit orator in whom everything desirable was present and everything present in desirable proportion — in fact, a pulpit orator, for completeness and symmetry of intellectual and ethical equipment, as nearly ideal as any age, or any race, could show.

What I have thus far said might be true of the orator Bersier as he appears in his printed sermons, and quite fail of truth in application to the living man as he appeared in the pulpit. Most felicitously, however, the correspondence between the oratory that is still to be read in Bersier's sermons, and the oratory that was silenced forever when Bersier died, is absolute and complete.

The present writer has, in the case of Bersier as well as in the case of every other pulpit orator here treated by him, with the two exceptions of Cardinal Newman and

Canon Liddon, enjoyed the advantage of hearing the preacher's living voice from the pulpit, in addition to reading his sermons fixed in print. He writes these words under the vivid sense of personal impression recently renewed in meeting the distinguished subject face to face after an interval of more than a quarter of a century elapsed since, during a memorable winter in Paris, he was a somewhat regular attendant at the services of the church (*L'Église Évangelique,* then so called) in which Bersier was at that time one of the several associate pastors.

How brightly I remember the Eugène Bersier that then was! His fame was still before him, but the manifest potentiality of fame, granted only the necessary years, was already his. In the bloom and promise of that manly juvenescence, he was a mirror of everything noble and beautiful to look upon in face and form; and when maturity touched him to the mellowness of a manhood in which the triumph of youth yielded to a benignant prophecy of approaching age, he became a reverend figure, to the last unbent, wearing a crown of silvering hair above a brow calm with power and a countenance heroically molded and illumined with benevolence; a reverend figure, I say, one as to which you would on reflection be uncertain whether its chief effect was that of grace or that of majesty. Bersier's voice, rich and sweet and strong, was highly penetrable to emotion, answering easily in its tones to the unction that seemed then so marked a trait in the spirit of its owner. To sum up all again in a word, and that word the same as before, the physical oratoric equipment of this preacher was complete.

Bersier's native gifts being such, he made his choice of standards and models for pulpit achievement appropriately pure and high. He was nobly severe with himself, exacting from his genius its most arduous best. Then, too, besides the spur within himself that he felt pricking him to his own finest possibilities, he had stimulation from without, in accomplished and distinguished colleagues, of whom Pressensé, a kinsman of his, was one, and in accomplished and distin-

guished auditors and friends — among these was M. R. St. Hilaire, a professor in the Sorbonne — who, I believe, did not spare to the youthful preacher their loyal senior cheerings or chidings, as occasion might seem to demand from them the one or the other. More, perhaps, than these spurs, present and pressing at his side, Bersier felt the genius and the fame of his great predecessors, the French preachers of other ages, incessantly calling him upward to ever higher and higher achievement in the eloquence of the pulpit.

I have thus spoken of motive appealing to the "natural man," in the subject of this paper. Such motive, I am sure, worked in Bersier and worked with power. But the "spiritual man," after all, was dominant in him. You unmistakably feel in his sermons the pulse of a heart and a conscience beating, and controllingly beating, from the will of Christ as a personal Master profoundly acknowledged by the preacher to be worthy of his own supreme affectionate obedience. Duty to Christ kept Bersier's ambition at the same time humble and high, at the same time high and steady. He maintained long a remarkably even tenor — for a tenor so exalted — of attempt and of accomplishment in the work of the preacher. This might have been left to be merely matter of oral tradition among those who heard Bersier's sermons living from the preacher's own lips; but fortunately there survives a monumental record of the fact in a series of printed volumes of his sermons, issued at irregular intervals during twenty years or more of the course of his ministry, which who will may read and test for himself the truth of my judgment. These sermons have qualities, of substance in thought and of form in expression, which richly entitle them to go permanently into the literature of the author's native country. They have many of them been translated into foreign tongues, and they are perhaps now fairly in a way to be even incorporated into the classic literature of the world.

"Of the author's native country," I have said; as if Eugène Bersier were a native of France. He in fact was

by birth a Swiss. This circumstance does not, however, alter the essential fact in the case; for Bersier's extraction was from the Huguenots, and he was virtually a native Frenchman, who simply happened to be born out of France.

In pronouncing Bersier worthy to be a classic in French literature, I do not mean to predict the actual future fortune of his fame. He may, or he may not, in fact, take his deserved rank as an author. To produce, in the case of any given man, the result of historic literary fame, many things must conspire — many things besides the man's own intrinsic desert. What fixed Bossuet, Massillon, Bourdaloue, as secular stars in the literary firmament of France, was far from being merely the indisputable transcendent merit of the genius and achievement of those men. Quite as much it was the splendor of the auspices under which they were first launched luminous on their magnificent orbits. The "great monarch," Louis XIV., set his royal signet upon them, and authoritatively pronounced them great. Under his august and absolute sentence, they were admitted great so long that finally their past fame of itself made their future fame secure. Besides this, the Gallican Church of their time was still, for France, the omnipotent arbitress of destiny in the sphere of human opinion. She commanded and it stood fast. The Church was the world, then, in France — the world in its pride of power to declare admirable and to have admirable whatsoever it pleased. The Church which was the world, declared admirable these great preachers; and admirable they continued to be in the national regard, until to question their oratoric supremacy became permanently and hopelessly a thing impossible, ridiculous. They passed into history. They were part of the indestructible intellectual glory of France.

Well, examine the surviving works of these seventeenth century Frenchmen, and you find them full worthy of their fame. They really are what they came to be reputed. But now examine in comparison the works of Eugène Bersier, supposed for the moment to be securely admitted of equal

fame with the works of his predecessors of the golden age of France. Do you find these recent works, upon proof, equally worthy of their supposedly equal fame? I, for my part, do not hesitate to answer, Yes.

But Bersier lacked arena like that which was Bossuet's, Massillon's, Bourdaloue's, even Saurin's, for running his rival oratoric career. There was for him no "great monarch," sitting in state, surrounded by his court, to watch and to applaud and finally to award the prize as with the "perfect witness of all-judging Jove." More important yet, the face of the world had, by Bersier's time, been completely changed from what it was at that earlier day. The world wore no longer now the mask of the Church. Nominal religion no longer sat on the throne. The power of intellectual preferment was lodged in other than ecclesiastical hands. Science had taken the place of nominal religion. The pulpit preached now in an atmosphere in which the elemental conditions were wanting, productive of the thunder and lightning that so magnificently played about the Olympus whence Bossuet, Massillon, Bourdaloue fulmined of old. There was "no motion in the dumb dead air" of the great world around him responsive to the living eloquence of Bersier. The eloquence was present, but the effect of the eloquence failed.

That is, of course I mean, the brilliant immediate effect of wide intellectual impression, of sympathetic appreciation, admiration, applause, *from the world.* There was supporting and inspiring recognition from a few — comparatively few — chosen spirits; but the great world was deaf and was dumb. The reflex depressing influence on Bersier himself could not but have worked somewhat to damp in him the merely natural ardor of a fine oratoric genius and ambition. Doubtless the monuments of eloquence that he has left behind him are less — less splendid, and perhaps less numerous — than those which he would have left, had the conditions under which he worked been, in the respects indicated, more friendly. The true triumph, however, which

would then have been his — the true intellectual and, much more, the true moral triumph — could not, under the supposed different conditions, have been greater than that which he actually achieved.

For Bersier never permitted any sense that may have been in him of personal disappointment, of egoistic unease, at the indifference toward his pulpit of the general world, to creep, even as an unconfessed undertone, into his sermons. Much less did he ever stoop to attempt capturing the attention of the world either by any sacrifice of the truth of the Gospel, or by use of any arts of popularity misbecoming to the pulpit, in his way of presenting that truth. Both as to the substance of what he taught and as to the form of his teaching it, he loyally held fast to the simplicity that is in Christ. So far, indeed, was he from stooping to the world in order to conquer the world — that is, in order to *seem* to conquer the world, really capitulating to it — so far was Bersier from this, that he instead constantly faced the world and accused the world and condemned the world — I mean that world of arrogant, browbeating, aggressive "advanced thought," thus self-styled, which in his time had succeeded to that world, so different, of conventional conformity to the Church, which existed in the seventeenth century of France. This new intellectual world Bersier confronted, not conciliated.

He confronted it, but not in the spirit of blind and bigoted pugnacity. He took pains to understand the world that he opposed. Indeed, nothing is more admirable than the open-eyed intelligence of Bersier's antagonism to the world that he felt bound to challenge and resist. He knew and he comprehended, for he had studied and he had meditated, what the world had to say in objection to the Gospel. He therefore did not beat the air with the blows that he delivered; he delivered his blows fairly between the very eyes of the falsehood that stood up in his presence against the truth of Christ.

This he did — and it was a signal homiletic victory —

without either, on the one hand, converting his sermon into a mere polemic and invective against unbelief, or, on the other hand, letting his sermon degenerate into a philosophico-religious dissertation. His sermons are proper sermons, as being popular discourses, and they are proper sermons also as being nutritive of the spiritual life. Read them as correctives of tendency in you to give way before the audacious claims of science advanced against religion, and you will find them so good that you will hardly wish better. Read them as food to personal piety, and you will feel them wholesome and strengthening. Still it is a fact that intelligent, vigilant, skilled antagonism and fence against modern — the most modern — infidelity is a very marked characteristic of many among Bersier's published sermons. In truth, take, for instance, his sixth volume, and you will find the proportion of the virtually apologetic or controversial element in it so considerable that you would feel compelled to pronounce excessive such a proportion assumed uniformly to prevail throughout the general tenor of Bersier's pastoral preaching. An assumption, however, like that would no doubt do him injustice. It is fair to suppose that, in choosing for publication from among his ordinary discourses, the author would, by a natural and a wise instinct, be led to pitch by preference, in a disproportionate number of cases, upon such as might be conjectured to have an intellectual added to their spiritual interest.

Mr. Spurgeon was, in this respect, an almost solitary exception among ministers that published their sermons. Somewhat in contrast with what is true in the case of the Frenchman, the Englishman's audience of the press seems to be made up of average ordinary persons endowed with an appetite that may be relied upon for commonplace spiritual nurture. That Mr. Spurgeon's audience should be predominantly such is not because that great popular preacher was not himself a thinking man, quite as capable as other thinking men, of wrestling with intellectual and spiritual doubts and fears. It is not because he could not at need

compose in a close-woven, most vital, tissue of style, tense with thought and with reason. This, in occasional, not infrequent utterances of his, he (when out of his pulpit, as sometimes, also, when in) abundantly showed that he could do. It is rather because Mr. Spurgeon, whether wisely or not, chose to make his sermons, even his printed sermons, for the most part unconscious of the unsettlement in belief that he knew to be everywhere rife around him.

Not so, in this last respect, was it with Bersier. Bersier, in his sermons, was frankly sensitive to the intellectual life of his time. As he felt, so in his pulpit he confessed, the sympathy of his generation. He had — at least one seems compelled to believe that he had — his own intimate personal need of satisfactory reconcilement between reason and revelation. He found his solution, and his solution found, he thought it wise — as, for *him,* the present writer holds that it was truly wise — to supply to his fellows.

It is time, no doubt, that generalization now be elucidated with instance. But I pause a moment to dispose first of a thought which, with some readers, may have been started by my conjecture (it was, of course, however confident, no more than conjecture) as to the working in Bersier's mind of his natural noble ambition to achieve great things in the pulpit; and his accompanying consciousness that, for the achieving of things great in the judgment of the world, there was wanting to him the spacious, the conspicuous, arena which would have been desirable. Those who know of the very important change that, at the acme of his earlier fame, Bersier made in his ecclesiastical relations, may not unnaturally be tempted to ask, How much, in the making of that change, was Bersier drawn on, whether consciously or not, by the partly personal hope of bettering his opportunity to produce the strong impression, as for his message, so likewise for himself, which he could not but feel his own inherent right to produce, on the great indifferent world around him? An obvious doubt and question to raise, but one which it would obviously be improper to entertain,

or, at any rate, publicly discuss. The change to which I refer was this: From being pastor in the "Free Church," a comparatively young, poor, and obscure ecclesiastical body, whose vital principle was conscientious separation from the State, Bersier became auxiliary-pastor, so-called, in the Reformed Church of France, an ecclesiastical body comparatively rich, while also august with age and history dating from the heroic times of the great Reformation, but so far a religious "establishment" as to consent to receive subsidies from the State and to submit to the State supervision which that consent logically implies.

This was a momentous change for Bersier to make. I need not conceal my own profound regret that he made it. True, he continued to protest his own individual adhesion in theory to the principle of complete separation between Church and State. True, also, the local Church of which he was founder and pastor never, in fact, accepted those State subsidies, which, however, as matter of right, he still insisted on its title to accept. Of course, had Bersier made exactly the opposite change — that is, had he gone over from the worldly higher to the worldly lower ecclesiastical body — there would then have been no possibility of imputing to him any but the purest and noblest motives. But then, as the case actually stands, it certainly is quite conceivable that his spirit may have been not less self-sacrificing than one must assume it would *necessarily* have been in the case which, in point of fact, did not occur. He may — who knows? — acting from convictions the most conscientious, frankly have faced the possibility of being misunderstood by some to his harm, and *still* have done only what he thought was his duty, even at that cost, so heavy to a high and delicate spirit like his.

Bersier undoubtedly thought that the time was not yet come *in France* for the complete consistent carrying out in practice of the theory, which he believed to be true, that the Church should be wholly divorced from the State. He thought that to cut loose from the national Reformed Church

of his country was virtually to abandon a noble and fruitful history of three hundred Protestant years, a history which the cause of French Protestantism needed, and to which it had an indefeasible right. The venerable traditions of the past had a peculiar, a sovereign, charm for the genius and imagination of Bersier. In truth, partly without knowing it, he was, so it seems to me, in fundamental spirit a conservative, not to say a reactionary, and withal an ecclesiasticist, a pontiff, like Bossuet — a *pontiff* like him, while a *man* very different; very different, not only by nature, but by such habit of life as must *make* different the man set through meet and happy marriage in the midst of domestic relationships, from the man who prolongs his days an inveterate compulsory celibate. Of course, I well know how generously open to ideas Bersier was, how hospitable to truth, how liberal and friendly toward true progress of every sort. This was in part due to fortunate temperament in him; but still more, I am persuaded, it was due to education and environment. Especially, perhaps, it was the spirit of Vinet, the teacher of his youth. With Bossuet's education and Bossuet's environment, Bersier would naturally have been a hierarch not less lofty and majestic, if far more sweet and sunny and genial, than Bossuet. He was cast in the same large mold; the port and speech of authority were as easily and instinctively his. I acknowledge, however, that even if I am right in thus divining Bersier's intimate character, still, in point of fact, some influence, perhaps that of his age and of his lot in his age, made him practically other than such as I have here for a moment ventured ideally to conceive him.

The idea, by whomsoever held, of historical succession, of formal continuity, in ecclesiastical development, this idea, with its correlate idea of Church authority additional to the authority of Scripture — additional and coordinate with that — is a pregnant idea, the parent of momentous doctrinal consequences. One of those consequences is the obliteration of the idea of definite personal individual con-

version, as a thing even theoretically necessary in order to membership in the visible Church. In recoiling from what he calls "individualism" in religion, the ecclesiasticist, such as Bersier became, is irresistibly drawn back into a conception of the collective Church of Christ, that can *logically* be satisfied only by the stupendous concrete embodiment found in the Church of Rome. Bersier, by a happy inconsistency, continued indeed to be himself a passionate Protestant; but it was hardly more than a pushing of the father's argument to its legitimate practical conclusion, when Bersier's son, to that father's inconsolable sorrow, publicly abjured his Protestant errors and took refuge in the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church. The mature Bersier — this seems incredible, but it is true — formally renounced his earlier opinion that the visible Church of Christ should seek to consist of regenerate persons only; he expressly taught that it should be opened also to receive members that were still to be converted. It was ecclesiasticism overcoming evangelicism in him. The natural consequence followed, that his preaching aimed less than otherwise it would certainly have done, to produce the immediate effect of conversion in individual hearers. He became predominantly what the French call a "moralist" in his preaching. Vitally orthodox, however, as orthodoxy may be distinguished from a narrower and stricter evangelicism, Bersier to the end remained. Except so far as, in unavoidable effect, excessive ecclesiasticism in him prevented, he was a loyal confessor and defender of the uncorrupt original faith of the Gospel. The reader of Bersier's collected sermons is not likely to be reminded at all, as the reader of Liddon's sermons is sure often to be, that the author was a thorough-going ecclesiasticist in personal conviction. Indeed, Bersier's reader will now and again be refreshed with an utterance in distinct and emphatic, if logically inconsistent, repudiation of the notion that human authority, even when speaking with the voice of the "Church," is entitled to tyrannize over the individual conscience. Ber-

sier did not like "individualism" in religion; but he was a Protestant, and "individualism" in his view had its rights, at least against the assumptions and usurpations of the Roman Catholic Church.

In accordance with the noble frankness of his character, Bersier plainly confessed his change of view, a change as I have hinted, to me most regrettable — in a discourse preached, and published separately in pamphlet, by him in the year 1877. That discourse I have before me as I write these words. It would of course be apart from the proper object of the present paper to attempt to show the error in argument which vitiates its teaching. One thing is very noticeable in it — namely, that the preacher refers throughout more to Church than to Scripture for his authority. In fact, the vital, germinant seed of all Roman Catholicism is unconsciously hidden in Bersier's discourse on "The Church."

Let us come now to the task of illustrating by example the quality attributed in general to Bersier as preacher. I take up for this purpose the sermon in his sixth volume entitled "The Place of Man in the Universe."

But immediately, in the very mention of this sermon, with its title as thus given, there arises the suggestion of preparatory remark deserving to be made. The *subject* of the sermon now to be examined belongs to the commonplace of pulpit discussion. The *statement* of subject in the title is simple, to the verge of commonplace again. Once more, the *treatment* — thought, course of thought, diction, style, tone, spirit — is of the same intellectual order. In accordance with the character already described as everywhere belonging to Bersier, there is here nothing strained, ambitious, nothing seeking to be individual, idiosyncratic, original, nothing calculated and studied to be striking, brilliant, surprising, overwhelming. All is in the self-control and measure of good taste, of high and serious, of self-effacing, moral and spiritual purpose.

But, let it be marked, the commonplace character of which I speak is just *sufficiently* that — not a shade of either more or less; no error, no excess, by either too much or too little. In a word, the commonplace of Bersier is, like the commonplace of Bossuet, of Robert Hall, of Daniel Webster, *not* platitude. It is commonplace *ennobled* by the quality of sincerity and of elevation in the author of it. Bersier has what may be emphatically called the excellence of *distinction* — that excellence which is the common invariable attribute of the classic in literature, the classic of whatever age, of whatever country, dealing with whatever subject, under whatever form, in whatever tongue. As I have already said, let no reader expect to be startled with the novel, the doubtful, the audacious, in Bersier. Such effect Bersier is so far from seeking that, he eschews it rather. What you may count on in him is thought so well considered on his part, that it will repay being well considered on your part; thought, that will, in the sequel of reflection, draw after it no reaction in you of disappointment and distaste to find that you were at first moved by it to a degree beyond its true value. There is emotion, too, as well as thought, in Bersier; but the emotion has always the same character of being well grounded. It follows the thought; it belongs to the thought, and is justified by it. Your satisfaction grows deep and grows full, by experience on your part, gradually becoming clearly self-conscious, of never being trifled with, of being always treated with grave respect, and of therefore being solidly secure, in this preacher's hands.

The moral and spiritual effect of such preaching of the truth is inestimably precious. It nourishes in the hearer a thoughtful, serious, earnest, settled, unmovable temper and habit of soul. The fixed, inexpugnable points of defense and refuge for the Gospel, the unmoving centres of resistance and reaction and recovery, safely fast, when all is flux and eddy besides, will be found in just such souls, a sifted few, a "remnant" small in quantity but in quality

great — in just such souls, I say, as spiritual teaching like Bersier's tends to build up. This kind of spiritual teaching counts, in eventual value to the world, many times more than the farther-shining, farther-sounding pulpit oratory of men like Beecher — were there indeed any *like* that unique son of genius!— granted even such pulpit oratory were in substance and spirit according to the truth of the Gospel.

Bersier's text for the sermon now in question is that familiar classic place of the eighth psalm, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" A fit and noble text, exactly introducing the theme of the sermon, without strain of ingenuity on the preacher's part to effect an adjustment.

The sermon commences with the remark that one of the most recurrent objections to Christianity, an objection common to ancient and modern thought, is the insignificance of man in the universe and the consequent improbability of man's being the subject of a divine providential care and of a divine redemptive grace such as the Bible pretends to exhibit in exercise on his behalf.

If Bersier had been preaching in America to Americans, it would have been appropriate for him to quote at this point the monumental testimony caused by Daniel Webster to be carved after his death upon his tombstone at Marshfield. The quotation would have been worthy, both for the form of expression, brief and simple, so characteristic of the author, and so harmonious with the style of the French preacher himself, which it gives to the argument for unbelief drawn from human insignificance, and then besides for the solemn affirmation, addressed in it by this great man to posterity, of his belief in the Gospel of Christ firmly maintained in the face of that argument and in the face of all argument against it:

"'Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.'

"Philosophical argument, especially that drawn from the vastness of the universe in comparison with the insignificance of this

globe, has sometimes shaken my reason for the faith which is in me; but my heart has always assured and reassured me, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be a Divine Reality. The Sermon on the Mount cannot be a merely human production. This belief enters into the very depth of my conscience. The whole history of man proves it.

DANIEL WEBSTER."

Instead of quoting this, Bersier quotes a lively appropriate passage from the ancient heathen Celsus, which states the obvious objection strikingly. A remark closely following, illuminated by an instance from astronomy, composing a fine rhetorical climax, to the effect that late science, by its discoveries and its guesses, has given keener apparent point to the objection, with, then, an illustration or two appealing to universal human experience such as will bring the objection home to every hearer's heart,— and the subject of discussion is effectively *introduced.*

The climax just now mentioned closes with the statement of a prodigious conclusion, reached by the English astronomer Herschel, as to the distance from the earth of one of the stars in the Milky Way:

"Before these formidable figures" [exclaims the preacher] "we recoil dismayed; we say, with Pascal, 'The solitude of those infinite spaces terrifies me;' our infantile confidence gives way, God escapes us, and the saying of the psalm spontaneously springs to our lips, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him? What is the Son of Man, that thou visitest him?'"

That citation from Pascal is characteristic of Bersier. He has a natural kindred with elevated spirits like Pascal. His second illustration — that drawn from universal human experience — similarly involves an allusion to Bossuet:

"When one feels as if lost in the crowd, when (is not this the experience of many among those now listening to me?) one walks there solitary, unknown, seeking in vain for sympathy, and finding nothing but the empty exchange of superficial sentiments, when

one suffers without hope, when one has prayed without winning reply, when one has come on purpose to kneel in the church and goes out more skeptical and more forlorn than he entered, when one muses, as Bossuet has expressed it, that he has appeared here below only to make up number, and that the piece would not the less have been played if he had remained behind the scenes, one repeats, with a sombre bitterness, the saying of the text, 'What is mortal man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?'"

Thus, as has already been hinted, the introduction ends. The link of transition from introduction to discourse is simply this:

"It is to this cry of your troubled hearts that I would respond, and my response — need I say it? — I wish to seek here in the Book of Life, in the eternal Word of the true and living God."

It is one of the recognized traditions of French pulpit oratory, followed, as has been pointed out, by the English Liddon, that the discourse be divided into parts such that the typographical device of numbering them with Roman numerals across the page will be appropriate. Here commences Bersier's

"I."

The first part consists of the statement, confirmed and illustrated by citation of texts, that although the Bible itself contains the most impressive affirmations conceivable of man's nothingness in the presence of the vastness of the universe, the same Bible reveals a God greater than the universe, who yet has the concern of a Father in men as His children.

Bersier's second part consists of an antithetic complemental exhibition from Scripture of the *greatness* of man in paradoxical combination with his littleness. In the course of this he makes a fine, effective return upon those men of science who, in one breath, belittle human nature to make

it seem absurd that human nature should be the object of a Divine revelation, and, in the next breath, represent human nature as sufficient to itself without a Divine revelation, nay, even without a God by whom such a revelation might be given. It is the glory, he says, of Christianity to meet at once both the one and the other of these two contradictory attacks. He recalls the word of Pascal: "If man exalts himself, I abase him. If he abases himself, I exalt him." After a splendid passage of ascription to the powers of the human mind, Bersier exclaims finely:

"What matters it then to me that man is but an insignificant atom in the material universe? Does the genius of Napoleon or of Galileo require the body of a giant? Nay, does not the very suggestion bring a smile to your lips? If our planet is a world in which the plans of God are understood, will you complain that its mass is but the hundredth or the thousandth part of some of those stars with which the firmament is sown? Will you have it that those physical limits prevent its being the marvelous observatory whence the universe may be faithfully studied? Let us dismiss, then, that strange argument which consists in measuring the value of man by the place that he occupies in space and in time. For myself, that value seems to me by so much the greater, it takes hold of me by so much the more, as it displays itself on a narrower stage, and never without a thrill of enthusiasm do I exclaim afresh with Pascal: 'Man is only a reed, the weakest in nature; but it is a reed that thinks! There is no need that the whole universe arm itself in order to crush him. A breath of vapor, a drop of water suffices to kill him. But though the universe should crush him, man would still be more noble than that which kills him, because he knows that he is dying; and of the advantage which the universe has over him, the universe knows nothing. All our dignity consists, then, in thought. It is from this that we should draw our exaltation, not from space and from duration which we should not be able to fill.' Admirable words, which, under a form of expression precise and severe, resemble the fragments of an orphic hymn chanting the true greatness of humanity."

Bersier's Third Part proceeds to admit that the foregoing

demonstration of the true greatness of man is adapted to produce its effect only upon the elect few, while the common many need something more simple, more easily understood. This something he finds in those moral attributes which, distinguished herein from the purely intellectual, all men possess in common. With admirable oratoric instinct for oratoric effect, he describes a poor degraded human being, the pariah of the streets, and says:

"Behold him lost in the human ant-hill; you will be tempted to smile at the idea of his possessing an immortal soul, and of his occupying any place whatever in the plans of God. But suddenly the scene changes! You are in the court of justice; here before you is a judgment-bar, and that despicable creature of a moment ago is brought to the criminal bench under charge of being a murderer. Whence comes it that all is then transformed in your impressions? Why does society come to a halt in its march in order to attend the trial of this wretch? Why these magistrates, this assemblage of public officials, these long legal arguments, these learned researches? Why the intense emotion of this auditory, hanging on the speech of an advocate who seeks to defend this life? Why this silence as of death, at the moment when the sentence is about to be pronounced? Ah! I assure you at that moment you are no longer tempted to smile, and levity now would excite only indignation and disgust. The explanation is that man is great, that his liberty is not an empty sophism, that there is in his destiny something that marks it august. This is the more manifest in proportion as society advances, as it is educated and civilized. The savages of Dahomey may, in a day of reckless revelry, make a pond with human blood and build a pyramid of human skulls, but under the light of Christian civilization the lowest of malefactors may not be touched save by the sacred arm of law. There, my brethren, is something which the Gospel has made so clear that no one will attempt even to dispute it. Man is accountable, man is not a brute whose nerves or whose blood push him on by fate to murder; man has it in his power to say No to God Himself; man has it in his power to secure his own destruction or his own salvation."

Part Fourth advances to affirm that the moral greatness

of human nature has been still more strikingly displayed in the charatcer of the Ideal Man, Christ Jesus. Even if, Bersier says, man had himself invented that illustrious figure, the figure so invented would still remain the supreme triumph of human nature. But there is something here, he declares, better than an invention:

"The colossal attempt to which Strauss brought a skill of science as ingenious as it was profound, that attempt of his to resolve the Gospel into a myth, into a sublime dream of the human consciousness, is to-day definitively abandoned. There is not a single man of science who does not admit that Christ lived. . . . Now, when you study that life, does it ever occur to you to think for one moment of the littleness of the theater upon which it was lived? Do you not feel that the greatness of Jesus Christ is of a different order, compelling us to elevate ourselves to far different thoughts? . . . What matters it to you that all this occurred in an obscure corner of Galilee and upon a little planet lost in the vastness of the universe? . . . Enlarge the theater of these scenes, give to them gigantic proportions, you will have added to them absolutely nothing."

Having pointed out that the dignity of the person of Jesus Christ imparted itself to all that was associated with him, Bersier, with fine, because just and lofty, pathos, exclaims:

"No doubt unbelief may be able to obliterate for a few days those sublime teachings, and our common people, blinded by sophists, may forget that prodigious revolution which transformed the ideas up to that day dominant in the world; but the mistake soon disappears, and the consciousness of the little ones of the earth understands that the Book which has set forth, as furnishing example to mankind, a few fishermen thenceforth more popular than your Cæsars and your Alexanders, is the best charter of the rights of humanity."

Bersier's Fifth Part discovers in the doctrine of redemption the crowning demonstration of the worth of human nature. He says:

"The tragic solemnity of our destiny, the gloomy power of evil, and the infinite greatness of the Divine love, invest themselves, in the light of the cross, with a splendor of revelation which it is no longer possible to extinguish. . . . They tell us it is absurd to pretend that redemption was achieved by the Son of God on a planet so insignificant as our globe. Would it then be easier to accept it, if it had had for theater some mighty star — say one of those prodigious suns about which gravitate thousands of worlds? For myself I here recall the exclamation of the prophet saluting the obscure hamlet which was to become the cradle of the Redeemer: 'O Bethlehem, though thou be the least among the thousands of Judah, it is from thee that shall come forth He who is to rule over Israel!' and, looking at our earth, that other cradle of Christ, I, in my turn, exclaim: 'O earth, planet lost in the vastness of the universe, thou art nothing in space but an atom of dust, but it is thou that hast seen love beam out in its highest splendor, and a gaze which should explore the infinite depths of the worlds would not be able therein to discover anything greater, anything more magnificent, than the sacrifice of the cross.' . . . There is something which every Christian can understand, even the most ignorant, the most insignificant, the most obscure. . . . God has remembered him, God has redeemed him, God wills to make him sharer of an eternal glory; that is enough to make him forever triumph over the besetment of the skepticism which assumes to crush him by telling him that he is nothing."

Bersier's Sixth Part, I give entire:

"My closing word shall be addressed to those who ridicule our simple faith in what they call our proud pretensions. What is man, with a smile they say, that God should remember him? Well, I shall frankly avow it, I discredit this simulated humility. It is an humility too great not to be open to suspicion. Look at them, those very men who are irritated at what, on our part, seems to them a childish illusion or else an insufferable presumption. No expression appears to them too strong when the object is to overwhelm us. But mark how well they will understand the art of taking their revenge, and what a surprise they have in reserve for us! You shall see them applaud without hesitation theories that banish God from the world, and make man the sole

sovereign of nature. A moment ago, in their view, man was nothing, now he becomes well-nigh all. It is to God that they would apply the words of my text. It is of Him that they would say, 'What is God, that man should be mindful of him?' God, in their view, is only a name, traditional and obsolete, expressing force or first cause. He is merely a zero; and man, whom they were blaming us for exalting, becomes the sole master of his own destiny, the sole judge of his own deserts, the sole being whose action is to be taken account of in history. He does not deserve to have God concern Himself with him; and it is an insufferable presumption on his part to believe that He does; but he is able to dethrone God and to affirm with confidence that no superior will has rights over him. Thus they will have nothing of Christianity, which unhesitatingly affirms our greatness, and they make of man a miserable God, whom they exalt by making him drunk with pride. If our faith had need of being avenged, it is in such contradictions that its revenge might be tasted. But other sentiments animate our hearts. We think, with a bitter sadness, of that perpetual effort with which man seeks, in every age, to escape God; opposing to His light all possible sophisms and to His love all possible evasions; to-day making himself too little to deserve attention from Him, and to-morrow finding himself too great to have need of His grace; by turns abasing himself to the point of contempt, and raising himself to the point of idolatry; arming himself with his own nothingness, or with his own pride, and finding any ground good for forgetting the Almighty upon whom he depends, the most holy Judge whom he has offended, the Father from whom he has wilfully separated himself, the Being, in fine, whose love annoys him, because He claims in return his adoration and his unstinted consecration. Ah! let us bless God that He has revealed to us our true destiny! It will be with the accent of repentance — while we recall not only our littleness but our wretchedness, not only our nothingness but our unworthiness — that we shall repeat the words of the Psalmist, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him?' and our hearts will salute with ardent gratitude that compassionate love which, in our abasement and our wretchedness without limit, causes its splendor without limit to shine forth."

I have been thus full in presenting one select sermon of

Bersier's as a whole, because it seemed to me that I could best in this way reveal the secret of his method and his merit. The sermon chosen for example was not chosen as either superior or inferior to the average production of this noble preacher's genius exhibiting itself in print.

I may remark that the discourse here passed under review is not, if I remember right, included in any volume of English translation from Bersier's works. I could have offered sermons of his whose matter would have been more interesting; but I could have offered none more truly representative of his habitual quality. Fundamentally such as he has thus been shown, Bersier will be found to be in every sermon that he has printed. Nowhere, it may safely be said, will he appear *less* fresh in matter of thought, *less* striking in form of expression. I have dared present him exemplified in a style of sermon that would, in the case of any preacher, fatally reveal his essentially and unredeemedly commonplace quality, if the preacher were in truth an essentially commonplace man. If Bersier has stood the test, then he has stood the crucial test; and I think it will be agreed that he has not been found wanting. I put on record here the testimony of my own experience in reading his sermons. Every additional sermon read confirms and even heightens my impression of his value. As I have already before said, I now repeat with emphasis, to many a wise minister not at present familiar with French, it would be worth while to master the language, if only for the sake of reading Bersier's sermons in their original text. Without this arduous condition, however, some fairly effective knowledge is accessible, to such a man, of Bersier's work; for several volumes exist of sermons of his translated into English. Of these, one volume was published in New York by A. D. F. Randolph. The translator in this instance did his work well. Besides the New York volume, there are three volumes published in London, prepared with equal knowledge on the translator's part of the French language, but with perhaps less felicity in the command of English expression.

What is needed, and what I should like to see demanded by the English-reading public, is a competent English translation of *all* Bersier's sermons.

For the information of such readers as may be inclined to gratify themselves experimentally so far and no farther, I may mention that a very handsomely printed single volume of select sermons from Bersier has lately been issued in Paris, to serve in the way of appropriate memorial of the author, which is sold at the nominal price of one franc (twenty cents). This is the result of a generous subscription for the purpose made by Bersier's friends and admirers. The edition is limited; but, until it is exhausted, the volume may be ordered through any American bookseller, or directly from G. Fischbacher, 33 Rue de Seine, Paris, who publishes all Bersier's works.

I cannot, after all, dismiss the subject of this paper and feel that I have done him justice with the reader, without adding a brief appendix of citations to exemplify the saliences and brilliancies of thought and of expression which at intervals attract and stimulate the reader everywhere throughout the course of Bersier's sermons.

In a sermon on "Cæsar and God," with what delightful, good-natured reduction to palpable absurdity is treated, in the following sentence, a mistake of some Christians:

"It were strange, if, because we expect one day the perfect bursting into flower of truth and of justice, we should content ourselves to remain indifferent to their triumph here and now."

At the conclusion of the same sermon, how absolutely fit and felicitous this turn:

"Christ said to the Jews, 'Show me a denary, and I will point out to you thereon the image of Cæsar.' We may equally say, 'Show me a human heart, we will point out to you thereon the image of God.' . . . Render to God that which is God's."

What pitilessly penetrative insight into the truth of self and of human nature, is here:

"Listen to a conversation in society where wit gives itself free play, and where the wish to shine prevails over those hypocritic complaisances sometimes mistaken for esteem of others; mark, if you have the skill to do it, all the little treacheries, all the petty perfidies, all the steel-cold criticisms which there abound, and then come and tell us that La Rochefoucauld calumniated human nature!"

Here is a fine and just appreciation of a trait in the bearing of Jesus toward His disciples that often escapes its merited attention:

"Consider, from this point of view, the manner in which Jesus Christ trains and prepares His disciples. I have just been recalling to what moral height He summons them; I have now to remark with what admirable patience He conducts them thither. It is impossible to think of it without a stir of profound emotion; never was human nature treated with such respect. . . . You find delicacies the most exquisite, words that warn without wounding, that enlighten without dazzling, that humble, then revive, without even once despising. Such a patience is sublime."

The French preachers generally — and Bersier is one with his compatriots here — deal very sparingly in elaborate illustration. Their similes and comparisons are few; and the few are brief and simple. The Attic character of their eloquence is herein conspicuous. They content themselves with thought, clear enough, in clear enough expression, to make illustration seem a thing superfluous, if not even almost impertinent. The following passage from Bersier is an example of what he does on those rare occasions when he frankly illustrates:

"Never, perhaps, has the cause of the Gospel been less popular with those little ones and feeble ones of the world, to whom the Gospel opened room so wide, and out from among whom it chose a certain few to make of them the spiritual masters of mankind. This revolting injustice does not dishearten us. We shall not cease to repeat that the individual has a sacred value, that every system is sophistic which sacrifices the individual; we shall not

cease to point out that, when the love of God burst in splendor on the world, it commenced by bestowing itself on plebeians, till then utterly forgotten and despised, on beings each one of whom was called, chosen, guarded, by Christ. It is by this token that men recognized the fact that God was visiting humanity. When the sun ascending enkindles the horizon and thrills the slumbering planet with his beams, the proud summits of the Alps salute him by blazing again under his rays of fire; but at their feet the tiniest floweret opens her petals to receive, she also, his warmth and his light. It is thus that God, the sun of souls, while illumining the world, humbles Himself toward each one of his creatures, and on each sheds His light and His love."

I ought to remark that the example, given in full abstract, of Bersier's sermons is not to be taken as indicating an invariable method on his part of plan and analysis. There will be found a considerable number of other instances in which too the divisions are sextuple or septuple, as they are in that. But more often perhaps, the divisions will be found fewer, being not infrequently triple or even double only. In fact, Bersier's method in plan, is flexible and various. He tends, however, always to be topical rather than textual, his sermons accordingly possessing little of that strictly exegetical value which is so remarkable a characteristic in Dr. McLaren.

That I seem not, to some reader of mine, excessive or perhaps even quite solitary, in my high estimate of a preacher thus far too little known among us Americans, I may say that Canon Liddon quotes Bersier, or refers to him as source or confirmation of view, in his celebrated Bampton Lectures; that the late Archbishop of Canterbury, so I heard in Paris on excellent authority, made it a point, in visits to that capital, to hear Bersier preach; that M. S. de Sacy, in the "Journal des Débats," put his reputation in stake by using with respect to Bersier the following language: "As moralist, M. Bersier is equal, I do not fear to say it, to the most illustrious names of our ancient Catholic pulpit."

One more topic, with one illustrative citation further, seems necessary in order to round out this presentation of Bersier's oratoric talent to anything like even an approximate completeness. I have as yet given no idea of the passionate fervor in popular appeal of which, upon occasion, the eloquence of the great preacher was capable. During the menace of the communistic afterpiece to the great tragedy for France of the Franco-Prussian war, Bersier's voice was potent for a policy of moderation and wisdom. To audiences of the common people, he addressed himself in patriotic exhortation and remonstrance, of which the following passage may be taken as example. The allusion in it to our own country will make the quotation interesting. (With subsequent years, and with the author's transition to his later ecclesiastical views, Bersier's admiration and love of things American became less lively.) The speaker begins, in our quotation, with a reference to the terrific watchwords of the French Revolution, of the enormities of which he justly feared that a repetition was preparing:

"Let us have done with traditional lies; let us cease speaking of 'salutary rigors' and of the 'public safety'; let us beware how we thus furnish weapons to the apologists of Philip II. and of the Inquisition. It is not in suspicion, in violence, and in blood, that liberty and justice can be founded. To all these deceitful legends, let me, gentlemen, oppose history. Eight years ago the greatest republic of modern times seemed on the point of foundering in a frightful tempest. A formidable insurrection had almost annihilated her. Ah! if ever man, if ever chief of State, had been justified in invoking reasons of 'public safety' in order to suspend the law, in order to make appeal to terror, it surely was Abraham Lincoln; for, on coming into power, he confronted treason everywhere. The President whom he succeeded had surrendered to the slaveholders of the South the arsenals of the republic, the skeletons of the army, its fleets, and almost all its resources. The majority of the agents of the executive power were obnoxious to suspicion. Anarchy, discord reigned everywhere. Each morning hundreds of daily journals launched at the new administration outrage and insult; they

threw ridicule on its plans, taxed it with feebleness and imbecility, and spread everywhere a feeling of distrust by exalting the talents and resources of the insurrection.

"What, meantime, were foreign nations doing? Imperial France, renouncing the glorious memories of the eighteenth century, was holding out secretly her hand to the slaveholders of the South, and, by creating the Mexican Empire, was conspiring with them to overthrow that American Republic whose pure splendor was eclipsing her. England remained an impassive and cynical spectator of what she believed to be the subversion of the American Union, as she remains to-day an impassive and cynical spectator of what she believes to be — but of what is not to be — the death of France [cheers and applause]. Never was country more menaced than America then, never was government the object of such attacks. And meantime Lincoln permitted the tempest to let itself loose against him. To objurgations, to provocations, to menaces, to insults, he responded by calm and by serenity, showing thus that true force does not consist in violence, which is always easy, but in self-possession, which is the highest victory; and when triumph came to crown his admirable perseverance, he could bear witness that he had never suspended a single right, had never committed an act of usurpation or of vengeance, had never veiled, one day, one hour, the figure of Liberty. Do you know what is the result? It is that to-day the great American republic is there before us, on the other side of the ocean, like a pharos, a beacon-light, whose resplendent beams illumine the night of gloom through which we are passing. Do you not hear? She cries to France, 'Rise thou, young republic of France! Rise thou from thy cradle full of blood and of tears! Rise thou, to become great, no longer by terror, but by justice and reverence for humanity! And then, standing erect, like two immortal sisters, thou in the Old World, I in the New, we shall see pass before us and engulf themselves in the contempt of history all despotisms of a day, all dominations that have no other basis than the force of bayonets and the divine right of kings.'" [Prolonged applause.]

I indicate the punctuations of responsive applause that enlivened this address. These seemed a necessary part not only of the occasion, but of the oratory. One can imagine

how a large amount of practice in such popular harangue, with its opportunity of audible reaction from hearers, might quite have transformed the stately eloquence of Bersier. As was the case with our own American Dr. Storrs, Bersier never fully showed all that he was capable of doing, in the way of distinctively popular oratory.

I linger, with a somewhat pathetic sense of purpose inadequately fulfilled, in concluding this paper. I can make no reader of mine understand with me, how the gracious presence of the subject himself, as I last saw him, now almost exactly three years ago, stands yet vivid benignantly before me, refusing to hear farewell!

X

CHARLES GRANDISON FINNEY

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Mr. Finney died in 1875, at eighty-three years of age. The following paper, as its tenor shows, was written and published in close sequel to his death.

Mr. Finney's personality was a very powerful one — so powerful that the considerate practical psychologist might easily raise with himself the question to what extent the mere momentum and impact of his will contributed to the truly remarkable effects of his eloquence. He was tall, he had piercing eyes (of gray, as I seem doubtfully to remember) over which beetled heavy eyebrows, his voice was solid sound, with edges, if one may so express it, clear-cut, and, when he spoke, he spoke like a born master of assemblies, and few indeed could have been the occasions on which an audience would not give way before his dominating power.

The oratoric imaginative vision with which he could describe, was extraordinary. A gentleman told me once of hearing Mr. Finney compare the danger in which the unrepentant sinner unconsciously lives, to the case of a man in a boat caught, without his knowing it, in the rapids above Niagara Falls, and incessantly moving nearer and nearer to the brink of the precipice over which the water takes its frightful plunge. The realism, the histrionic rendering, of the description, was such that the audience involuntarily held their breath in sympathetic suspense and dread, while the pictured approach to the fatal point was made, until at the climax, one man in the audience cried out audibly, "My God, he's gone!" That was great oratory, if it should not rather be called great acting; but I do not recommend it as

an example of great preaching. It was an exceptional case, in which Mr. Finney allowed the impression, on his hearers, of his illustration, to get the better of the impression that ostensibly he was seeking to make for the truth to be illustrated. I have given the incident to show the power which this great preacher could at will exert to make his hearers see, with himself, things not visible. The more legitimate use that Mr. Finney could make, and that he did most effectively and most fruitfully make, of this rare gift of his, is adverted to in the course of the following paper.

Mr. Finney could not justly be called eccentric, but he certainly was in a high degree idiosyncratic and unconventional. Of one exhibition of this quality in him I was myself once made quite startlingly the subject. It was in Glasgow, a few years after that signal winter of religious revival in the city of Rochester, spoken of in pages to follow. I was present on a Sunday morning in a church ("chapel," must I call it?) in which the city papers had announced that Mr. Finney would preach, or perhaps rather give an address, on the great American revival of a year or two before. I sat directly in front of the speaker, and he at one point, desiring to fix a certain date, said, with evident effort to remember, "This was in —— 1857; wasn't it?" he suddenly added, fastening his eyes on me, and perhaps reinforcing his reference with a demonstrative forefinger. I was too much taken by surprise to do anything but nod my head in token of confirmation. I trust I was forgiven, if I did this rather to close the incident, than because I was really on the instant perfectly clear that his date was right!

I may properly close this prefatory note with a word of personal acknowledgment. Partly no doubt because his influence was exerted upon me when I was in the plastic and susceptible period of youth, still more perhaps because I was by nature of a disposition to respond to precisely such an

influence as his, Mr. Finney did in fact contribute to the molding of my own ideal in preaching, beyond any other man in the world since Paul. The best way for readers of this criticism to make themselves amends for not having enjoyed the privilege of witnessing in person Finney's conduct of what we, perhaps not quite happily, call a "revival," is to procure a copy of his book, entitled "Lectures on Revivals," and read that again and again with studious heed. In that book, Charles G. Finney and his method lives and is immortal. (I use the verb in the singular, for his method is one with the man.)

In paying this tribute to the genius and memory of Finney, and especially in making the admiring mention that I do of his "Lectures on Revivals," I would not be understood not to have my personal reserves as to the matter here and there of his preaching. He permitted himself occasional extravagances of assertion such as I by no means consider safe models for the pulpit to follow. He must be read with application of discount where there is need, and need at times there is, which the studious reader should be on the alert to discern. Finney's over-expression is an incident of his method, but it is not of the essence of his method. It is indeed less a matter of method than a matter of temperament. It would be equally unwise, on the one hand, to turn away from him, deterred by his excesses of statement, and, on the other hand, to approve him and imitate him in these.

CHARLES GRANDISON FINNEY

One of the greatest of preachers ceased from among men when the patriarch of Oberlin died. I question, indeed, whether any human being ever preached, during a long series of years with greater power than did Charles G. Finney. A little attempt at analysis of his eloquence may be interesting as well as profitable. It will not be unseasonable either, although made now, while the public heart is still vibrating with the shock communicated by the news of his sudden departure.

Sudden his departure was; but it was not premature. His sun did not go down until the long, lingering day was complete. It hung soft and splendid on the horizon, shedding a full, though mellow, light through the unclouded air, not as if reluctant to descend, but as if loving yet a while longer to bless — until now, at last, by the abrupt refraction of death, it is hidden forever from our eyes. Besides this, President Finney's moral and intellectual quality was such that we honor and not wrong his memory when we try, in whatever way, to turn his example to useful practical account.

It so happened that I was a student in the University of Rochester when, in the winter of 1855-6, President Finney held the last of his remarkable series of preaching services in that city. Preaching services I say; but I am immediately in doubt whether I might not equally well characterize them as praying services. For it was an essential feature of Mr. Finney's method as a revivalist to establish daily prayer-meetings at the outset, in connection with his preaching; and even the coldly rationalizing observer of his work would have been forced to confess that the praying, if only as a means of human self-excitation, was, not less than the

sermons, the secret of his wonderful success. In 1825, or thereabouts, some thirty years before, while Rochester was still a village and while Mr. Finney was still a young man, he had made that place the theater of his efforts as a revivalist. Some of the most prominent citizens of the town, converted at that time, especially from among the lawyers, were in 1855 yet living to welcome Mr. Finney back to Rochester as their spiritual father.

I had somehow contrived never to hear much of Mr. Finney until he came to preach in Rochester at this time. I accordingly went at first to listen to his preaching, without any preconceived ideas whatever of its peculiar character. I was not at all attracted to go a second time. I failed to detect in his method anything that promised to command the public attention. A few days, however, passed, and the public attention undoubtedly was commanded, and I resumed attendance at the meetings. These were protracted through a period, as I now remember it, of at least three months. The interest was extraordinary. The city was taken possession of. Scarcely anything else was talked about. The atmosphere was full of a kind of electricity of spiritual power. The daily papers all reported the meetings at great length. Strangers casually visiting the city were unable to resist the infection of the prevailing religious influence. The railroads at one time, I remember, were obstructed by a snowstorm, which detained large numbers of passengers temporarily in the city. A large proportion of these were attracted into the meetings. The result was that a great many, during this brief interval, were converted. People accosted each other in the street, and began an exchange of question and reply on the subject of personal religion, as naturally and easily almost as in a time of commercial distress they would talk of the financial condition of the country; or, to use an apter illustration, as in a time of epidemic disease they would talk of their own health and of that of their families and friends.

It was the second year following, 1857-58, that the great

business panic spread universal monetary disaster over the country, accompanied and succeeded by the memorable religious revival which marks that as so important an epoch in the calendar of the American churches. The Rochester movement, under Mr. Finney's preaching, was, therefore, independent of that more general awakening. It had no relation to it, unless it were in some degree a precursor and producer of it.

Leaving out of account the supernatural element that wrought in the Rochester movement, we see Mr. Finney standing in it apart and alone, as its single master spirit, as the Prospero — if such an application will not be deemed unworthy of the theme — the Prospero of the mighty moral tempest.

I am profoundly persuaded that Mr. Finney was a man of God, in the antique, scriptural sense of that expression. I have no doubt that he derived, through prayer and obedient living, from the Holy Ghost himself that extraordinary, that supernatural, power which he wielded (if it did not rather wield him) in his preaching. This is my unwavering conviction. I record it as my own joyful personal witness to what I believe to have been in his case the strengthening and inspiring fact, and to be in the case of each one of us all the strengthening and inspiring possibility.

But the divine supernatural factor of Mr. Finney's influence as a preacher is, of course, beyond our exploration and analysis. We have done our duty and exhausted our privilege concerning it, when we have devoutly acknowledged its presence and noted, besides, the human conditions of its presence. These conditions are, in fact, one condition. They may all be summed up in a single word — obedience. Mr. Finney obeyed God. His obedience was the conducting medium that drew down the power of the Holy Ghost upon him. If his obedience had been still better than it was, it would have drawn down upon him the same power in still greater measure.

For there is no limit to the divine power that is ready

to pour down upon us at the demand of an obedient spirit on our part. We have but to enlarge the conducting capacity of the medium appointed, in order to receive in corresponding degree all the promised fulness of God. Christ was not alone; his Father was with him, *because* he was perfectly obedient. He did always those things that pleased Him.

When I use the word obedience thus, of course I do not mean a conformity merely in act. I mean a voluntary conformity in being as well as in doing. I include faith, or trust, as a part of obedience. Mr. Finney's faith, which some, no doubt, would make to be the prime element of his power, had nothing of vagueness or of mysticism in it. It was practical. It was obedience rather. It did not seek to exist by itself, and exert, as it were, a magical influence, a kind of self-flattering miraculous power. It was content to take God at his word and act accordingly. It went right on and *obeyed*. This, I think, on the side of personal piety, and on the side, too, of the divine factor in pulpit power, is the great lesson to us of Mr. Finney's life. According as our obedience matches Mr. Finney's, God will make us strong like him; but, of course, in correspondence also with our mental and moral capacities, natural and acquired. What these were in Mr. Finney, I go on now to exhibit.

As I have already said, no analysis of Mr. Finney's pulpit power would be satisfactory, that did not take account of the preacher's personal religious character. He believed God like Abraham; like Abraham, believing, he obeyed, and, I repeat it, God honored this faith and this obedience by answering communications of power to his servant. In what follows, however, I seek to name merely the ordinary and natural elements of Mr. Finney's power in preaching.

In the first place, Mr. Finney had a distinct and consistent theological system. I do not say that his system was true. I need not raise the question whether it was true or false. It was a system, and it was distinct and consistent, whether false or true. It is not Mr. Finney's orthodoxy that I am

now making an element of his power. It is his determinate and systematic theology. He had a whole scheme of doctrine. The Gospel that he preached was a *plan,* with all its parts perfectly articulated and mutually harmonious.

But it was not so much the linked coherence of his theological scheme that contributed to his power, as it was the fact of the scheme's being his own. The scheme was his not because he accepted it, but because he made it. It may have been coincident, more or less, with other schemes. Whether less or more, mattered nothing to Mr. Finney. He neither received nor rejected a doctrine because it was in accordance with standards. He put nothing into his scheme that he had not himself fully tried by his own tests. He knew his system not as a man might that had thoroughly learned it. He knew it as only that man could who had framed it for himself. He imposed it upon others with absolute confidence, because it reflected his own thought and experience.

In the second place (I might almost say the third, so distinct are the two things first named), the same constitution of mind that made it a necessity for Mr. Finney to have a complete scheme of theological doctrine made it a necessity for him to be an analytical preacher. His mind was of logic all compact. His sermons were wonderful specimens of clear and exhaustive analysis. They resembled Jonathan Edwards's in this respect. He never said anything merely for the sake of saying something. Not a step was taken but in the line of straight advance toward the predetermined goal. The hearer was never at a loss to perceive the relation of one thing to another in the discourse. The interest, however, was not speculative, but practical. Mr. Finney did not suffer his delight in argument to mislead him to indulge in argument for its own sake. The conclusion was always more to him than the process, while yet without due process no conclusion was ever sought to be reached. He never expatiated. He was constantly advancing.

There was a moral quality in this analytic habit of Mr.

Finney's mind. His analysis of his subject was the result of conscientious painstaking. It was not simply because his mind *must* work in this way. It was, perhaps, quite as much because his mind — that is, his conscience — *would* work in this way. It was his *duty* to produce thought whenever he preached, and from the beginning to the end of his sermon he recognized the duty and fulfilled it. In the result, his duty no doubt became his delight.

In the third place, accordingly, Mr. Finney's method was to move the heart always through the mind. Never even in the height of a revival did he think it wise to use simply the emotion already engendered in his hearers, without seeking to give it more fuel in further truth, that it might burn still deeper and still higher. His rule was: Forever more truth. Truth, therefore, he continued to deliver with all the greater industry and zeal for seeing striking results already obtained. He never seemed distracted for a moment from his true aim, to enjoy the spectacle of his own work. He stood like a worker in iron at his forge, constantly heaping on coal or blowing at the bellows to force his fire to its necessary heat, and then smiting with strength and heed to fashion the metal to his mind, but pausing never to relish, as a bystander might, the warmth, to admire the blaze and sparkle, or to watch the effect of successive blows. When one piece was finished it was instantly put aside, and another plunged into the glowing fire or thence drawn out and laid upon the resounding anvil. The solvent heat of feeling Mr. Finney did not seek to produce for its own sake, but for the sake of preparing character to be molded into better forms. The hearer experienced no reaction after going out from under the preacher's personal influence, as of shame at discovering, upon cool, sober reflection, that he had suffered himself to be wrought up to heights of emotion for which he could not find adequate reason existing in his judgment.

In the fourth place, Mr. Finney exercised faith as *imagination,* or as the faculty of realization, to a degree of

vividness which I think I never saw equaled in any other man.

Unseen realities were present to him. Not present only, but distinct and tangible. His own vision of them impressed his hearers with a communicated secondary sense of their seeing them also themselves. He looked and spoke and acted like a man who was handling the invisible and impalpable realities of the eternal world, there in the living presence of his congregation. You could no more escape the impression of the preacher's being engaged with things that were real, however insubstantial, than you could in the case of an accomplished experimentalist in physics manipulating his viewless gases under your eyes in the public lecture-room. It is an unworthy source of illustration; but modern spiritualism furnishes us a peculiar use of language appropriate to our purpose. The unseen and eternal truths of the spiritual world "materialized" for Mr. Finney, and his hearers could see them, hear them, handle them. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled"— this seemed to be the language of the preacher, though more justly it might be said that his whole appearance changed these actions of the senses to the present tense; and he spoke to his congregation of what he was at that self-same moment hearing, seeing with his eyes, looking upon, and handling with his hands. The impression of living reality thus produced was irresistible.

Of the same kind, in the fifth place, was Mr. Finney's habit of appeal to his hearers' own consciousness. This was a very salient feature of his preaching. He had his system of psychology no less thoroughly elaborated than was his system of theology. Indeed, his psychology entered as an essential part into his theology. Scripture and consciousness were sources of authority for oratorical resort, of coordinate and equal value with Mr. Finney. An appeal to consciousness was his ever available short method of argument. He assured

his hearers what they knew and how they felt, with an air of certitude and infallibility that left them no room to doubt his being right. His ascendant will overpowered any struggling resistance on their part, and they unhesitatingly accepted the speaker's statement of what they knew and how they felt, as the unassailable testimony of their own consciousness. Of course, Mr. Finney was generally as accurate as he was conscientious, in thus interpreting men's hearts to themselves. But, whether right or wrong, he was believed by them, such was the overwhelming force of his imperial asseveration; and that answered equally well every purpose of his argument.

To the five elements into which I have thus analyzed the secret, on the human side, of Mr. Finney's effectiveness as preacher, add a sixth element, consisting of an elocution that matched admirably with the intellectual and moral characteristics of the sermon, and you have, I think, the principal elements of his pulpit-power. But perhaps I ought expressly to point out one thing further, which may not have been so clearly in the reader's mind as all through this paper it has been in my own, the fact that he had a perfectly *definite* and, still more, the one only *right,* idea of the object of all preaching — namely, to get men to *obey God.*

XI
PÈRE FÉLIX

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE following paper, different from the rest in being the report of a single occasion, and not an inductive study of the preacher founded on a collation of numerous instances of his work, is the earliest of all the series in date of composition. It was written durlng the winter of 1861-2 — the same winter during which I made the acquaintance, both public and private, of Eugène Bersier. It constitutes a kind of photograph, instantaneous photograph, of the impression vividly produced on my mind by the occasion it describes. It was written very rapidly in a letter to a friend, on the very day when I heard the sermon which is reported. I give it without change, at any point after the first paragraph, from the form that it spontaneously took at the time; the first paragraph was prefixed a few years subsequently, to fit it for appearing as a magazine article — which it did in "Putnam's Monthly" (second series), later merged in "Scribner's Monthly," the periodical now known as "The Century Magazine." In "Putnam's Monthly," for reasons of "journalism," it was printed under the title, "Father Hyacinthe's Predecessor at Notre Dame." It probably needs to be explained — such is the fugacity of fame!— that Father Hyacinthe (Charles Loyson), a Roman Catholic preacher, after exciting suspicion against himself as too "liberal" in his views and in his public expressions — a suspicion which, however, the accused succeeded in allaying by his defence of himself before the pope — visited this country and was here warmly received. This was just before the magazine publication of the present paper.

Père Félix (or, le Père Félix, as I suppose we ought to say, unless we freely anglicize and say, "Father Félix") died in 1891, at eighty-one years of age. His discourses, delivered in Notre Dame,— *Conférences,* they are called in French — have been published in numerous volumes. His name, before he became a member of the "Society of Jesus," was Celestin-Joseph Félix. An affectionately laudatory biography of Father Félix was published in a small volume, the year following his death. This biography contains some rather interesting notes of a personal relationship between Father Félix and the famous author of that brilliant philosophical work, *"Du Vrai, du Beau, du Bien,"* "The True, the Beautiful, the Good," Victor Cousin. Cousin, destined soon to die, took leave of Father Félix on the eve of starting for Cannes in quest of health, with words that no doubt profoundly delighted that ecclesiastic: "Be assured, my Father, that I shall not die without the crucifix in my hand." Cousin in fact died in Cannes by a stroke of apoplexy suffered while he was seated at the breakfast table.

PÈRE FÉLIX

EVERYTHING is defined by its antithesis. The vivid public interest rife at the actual moment respecting Father Hyacinthe recalls his brilliant rival and contrast, Father Félix. Father Félix preceded Father Hyacinthe as preacher at Notre-Dame. He represented the extreme papal interest in the Gallican church. He was set forth by this interest as the voice most capable of stemming the tide of liberal sentiment on which, partly swelling it, partly guiding it, but chiefly borne by it, Father Lacordaire had rode into his easy and magnificent renown. After a few seasons of his Conférences at Notre-Dame, attended by vast congregations of the selectest wit and wisdom of Paris, Father Félix yielded his place again to Lacordaire's true successor, Father Hyacinthe. Such is the oscillating, if not vacillating, policy with which Rome essays to stop Time, and turn the wheels of Progress backward.

Father Félix enlisted no sympathy. But the absence of sympathy only enhances the splendor of his intellectual triumph. Rarely has any arena of oratorical gladiatorship witnessed feats of strength and of skill, at the same time so barren and so admirable. The coolness, and the poise, and the confidence of power, with which this man sallied out, single-handed as it were, against the bristling and impenetrable front of God's embattled providential forces, would have been sublime audacity, had he himself been conscious of the odds. As it was, to Protestant eyes it seemed like pure light-hearted foolhardihood, saved, however, from grotesqueness by the marvelous address of the champion.

There are well-pronounced varieties — for aught I know, quite endlessly numerous — of effects that may be produced

by eloquence. Here, certainly, was a variety which to my experience was novel. It may not be devoid of interest to the reader to have it described. Let me describe it by telling the story of my first Sunday morning at Notre-Dame, during one of the Lents when Father Félix was the preacher there.

The hour for the sermon to commence was half-past one. I went before twelve, and not too soon. At twelve the best seats in the choir of the church were all taken. I paid a charge of three sous at the entrance of the choir for a seat at my choice. I wandered up and down the aisle extemporized between the rows of chairs already occupied, and finally was negotiating with a policeman — omnipresent representative of the Government — for the privilege of a place in the aisle, when that space should be closed up, expecting to stand, an hour, till then. Unexpectedly, and quite out of precedent, a young man near by beckoned to me, and gave me a chair (which he had sat *two or three hours* to reserve) by his side. I tried to repay him with my gratitude, and I succeeded, for he volunteered, as we went out, to keep a place for me the following Sunday. I engaged it.

This young man, a student, unlike almost all his fellows, seemed religious. He crossed himself, and murmured prayers, and bowed, and chanted, during the mass preceding the sermon. At odd spells — I ought to say, not exactly *within* the time occupied by the mass, however — he told me how the Père Félix was the most eloquent man of the times; that he was superior to Father Lacordaire, just deceased; that some called him the Bossuet of the nineteenth century; that all the celebrities of journalism, of philosophy, of letters in Paris, were in the audience. I asked him if he was a hearer of M. St. Hilaire at the Sorbonne. He said yes, and gratified me, and confirmed himself in my good opinion, by giving, he a Catholic, to M. St. Hilaire, a Protestant, just that character of earnestness and of suasion which I had attributed to him myself.

That vast cathedral, meantime, filled itself to the remotest

corner of its lofty galleries — now I did not quite see exactly that, but I believe it — while, at intervals, I read a report, bought the day before of the previous sermon of Father Félix. I found it so splendid, that I conjectured it might have been an unusual inspiration, and accordingly prepared myself to be disappointed in the effort of the day. I was disappointed, but it was by having my utmost expectations surpassed.

Father Félix addressed himself to the times, and did not beat the air. His general subject for the season was, "The Harmony of Reason and Faith." His sermons were polemics against Rationalism, which had spoken a recent and bold word through M. Renan, and been silenced for it there, at the College of France. The Church — that Church which claims by eminence, nay, exclusively, to be the *pillar and ground of the truth* — hastened officiously to the war. Certainly Father Félix was no mean champion. And, that day being taken as a specimen, he spoke for Protestantism, as well as for Catholicism — better even. I can easily believe that the truth, in its abstract, intellectual form, might call the muster-roll of its confessors, from beginning to end, without getting the response of a clearer-ringing voice than that of Father Félix. M. Bersier had told me he was a Jesuit, and a thorough one. Surely he was thorough one. Such adroit adjustment to time, and place, and public temper — such fencing, with logic vivified into rhetoric — such swift and infallible encounter of the precise face offered by the revolving prism of the question of the hour — such perfect blending of the man of the world with the son of the church, in that seductive deference to the rationalizing spirit of the age and that profound obeisance to hierarchical authority — it was worthy of the all-accomplished member of the Society of Jesus.

A man of medium stature, not forty years old, with a head that you would call round, and a rubicund complexion, — such appeared Father Félix to me. His eloquence borrowed little from his personal appearance, nor did his per-

sonal appearance at any time seem transfigured by his eloquence. His voice, without being anything extraordinary, was sufficiently musical, and it sent itself in clear globules of pure pronunciation, and elastic emphasis, to the farthest recesses of that pillared auditorium.

Hearing him preach was like seeing a salt crystallize. His matter seemed instinct with some spirit of life that moved it into perfect forms. Every sentence was a formulated thought — definite, clear, sharp, ultimate — like a crystal. The whole discourse was a glittering mass of crystallization — like those superb mountains of crystal, helped by art to their symmetry of aggregation, which they show you, at Paris, in the *Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers.*

It may be thought, from my illustration of the crystallizing process, that there was not much warmth in Father Félix's eloquence. And I cannot say that there was. If there was any, it was an incidental evolution, like the heat which kindles during an energetic chemical action. As for generous, vital, personal warmth, according to my thinking, there was none. The speaker's weapon was a lance of lightning, vivid, rapid, deadly. There was no thunderburst. The blade leaped suddenly to its mark, in silence, and *pierced* it always. Not an aim missed.

Of course, I describe the effect. There were passages of comparatively sonorous declamation; but the sound made no part of the impression on me. It was the swift, barbed thought, and the arrowy words.

The form of the discourse was as perfect as a type of nature. It was tripartite, and completely, exhaustively, comprehensive of the subject — which was, for the day, *how* the harmony of Reason and Faith is destroyed:

1st. Either by the absorption of Reason in Faith;

2d. Or by the absorption of Faith in Reason;

3d. Or by the separation of Reason and Faith.

The special admirable quality of the treatment was *definition,* sharp as a schoolman's, but without the schoolman's over-refinement. If thought is distinction, as has been said,

then here was thought. It is surprising how little remains for discussion, after terms are defined. The orator hardly did any thing more than state the three ways of destroying the proper harmony of Reason with Faith — and rested, as the lawyers say. After stating the current rationalism, the whole purport of which, quoting, respectfully, from an "illustrious Protestant," he declared to be the denial of the supernatural, either as existing or as possible, he rose into a lofty sphere of indignant declamation, protesting, in the name of humanity, that the supernatural does exist. It was as splendid as anything could possibly be — *without the awe-aspiring wrath of a passionate heart.* The cold flash of his eloquence lighted the place, like the heatless flame of the white Aurora Borealis. The ice-fields of the North Pole throw such a reflection of the sunshine which they freeze.

As the orator impaled Rationalism, shuddering on his spear, naked and self-conscious — unharmed, save by a too relentless exposure — his unsympathizing audience could not repress an audible laugh — the most curious, and most worthy of analysis, that I ever heard. It did not mean amusement. It did not mean gratification. It did not mean applause. It meant simply the recognition of success, *without emotion of any kind* whatever. It was almost cynical on both sides.

How do I account for this strange phenomenon — the absence of *sympathy* between speaker and hearer — in the midst of such resplendent oratory? Whether it was subjective or not with me — it was, in part, I can readily believe — I felt the repellent charm, radiant around that white-robed priest, of his Jesuitical character. He stood there insulated entirely from the electric touches of those human hearts, by the vitreous non-conductors of his ecclesiasticism. Representative of a suspected order, priest, celibate, Jesuit — how solitary he was! I could have pitied my human brother; but in the pride of schooled and imperial intellect, he *wanted* nothing that the heart had to offer.

You felt, rightly or wrongly, that the cleaving words he spoke were spoken more in the interest of church, than in the interest of truth, much more than in the interest of humanity. You wished him success against his foe — for it was also your foe — but you did not wish *him* the success. It was a strange suspense you experienced between good emotions. You had no sympathy for either of the combatants; you had no positive feeling at all; you were hostile toward the one, and you could not be friendly toward the other. I should have said that your only positive feeling was a disagreeable one.

Oh, if the heart of Luther could have stormed and thundered from that Olympus of intellect! If that mute, angry, lightning-tongued sky could have broken the spell that kept it arid! If it could have burst in sobs of passionate rain! Those who have enjoyed the privilege of hearing Father Hyacinthe from the same place, know how different and how much more grateful and more fruitful is the effect of eloquence when the heart answers to the head like Jura to the Alps. A mute tempest of cloud and lightning without thunder or rain is the symbol of Father Félix. A tropical burst of shower is the symbol of Father Hyacinthe.

Light without heat was Father Félix's sermon to me that day. No translation is possible that would not rob it of that finish of form which was a capital point of its effectiveness. The style was classic and polished to the last degree. There was nothing positive in the sermon, from first to last, that could offend *any* taste, religious, literary, or philosophic. It was all of an Attic purity. Except the word Catholicism, used instead of religion, here and there, there was absolutely not a suggestion which was not *truly* catholic — that is, fit for the adoption of any Christian. No hint of the Virgin, as is common. Pure, supreme, exclusive ascription to Christ — in the very words of Paul, and in everything *but* Paul's inimitable spirit. He closed by declaiming a rhetorical invocation of Christ — with open eyes, and oratoric gesture. It was the absolute zero in the temperature of his discourse.

I have perhaps been too severe as well as too long. I have hardly been too laudatory. I might mention that it seemed curious to see the preacher sit down, two or three times, as if it was a regular convention of the pulpit — it is, I believe — when the auditory, by unanimous consent, proceeded to coughing, and clearing their throats, and blowing their noses. Father Félix took no text.

So the art of pulpit eloquence — such as existed in the French Augustan age, the time of Louis XIV., when Bourdaloue, and Massillon, and Bossuet preached an almost perfectly pure gospel, with a perfectly pure diction — is not extinct in France. There is something exquisitely fascinating in what I can only call the accomplished literary politeness which you feel to be present and dominant in such discourse. It is the wisdom of God, unable to recognize itself, in the disguise of the wisdom of men. The very fidelity of the preacher seems to become but his graceful deference to the proprieties of the place and the theme. How one, after the contentment of the mind begins to cloy, does sigh for a moment of Paul! Even now we are all of us holding our breath to see whether Paul has not perhaps returned, for at least a moment, in the person of Father Hyacinthe.

XII

WILLIAM MACKERGO TAYLOR

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

I CANNOT but be aware that in certain instances, of which the present instance is one, the fame of the subjects of these criticisms has since their death suffered some diminution of brilliancy. The effort, however, of the critic was uniformly to carry up his judgments of the particular man to permanent homiletic principles applicable to his case. If he succeeded in doing this, the value of his critical work will be to a great degree independent of the present reputation of the preacher criticised. Dr. W. M. Taylor's audience, while he lived, was largely made up of persons who never came within the sound of his voice; for he published his discourses in books which at once found a wide circulation, and which now no doubt are in the hands of numerous readers. Dr. Taylor accordingly presents a subject of study promising still to be profitable.

WILLIAM MACKERGO TAYLOR

Dr. Taylor's personal presence corresponds with his character. It is impressive, distinguished. There is a clear note of dignity in it — dignity emphasized almost to the point of challenge, of self-assertion. You feel at once, "Here is a man as solid as is his bodily substance;" and his bodily substance gives to the imagination a brave sense of weighty reaction.

Dr. Taylor's native Scotch quality is contrasted by his present American environment — contrasted, rather than subjugated, by it. His national and his individual identity is something far too sturdy, too resistant, to be effaced and conformed by the external influences amid which it happens to be placed. You are stimulated by the encounter of this frank, unapologetic, unyielding, personal difference.

Something of the same contrast with the type prevailing around him extends to Dr. Taylor's sermons, both their matter and their manner. These are singularly independent of influence from the moral and intellectual atmosphere in which they are produced. Dr. John Hall adjusts himself somewhat — consciously as well as unconsciously perhaps — to his exchanged conditions in this new world; Dr. Taylor, hardly at all. Nay, it might rather seem that Dr. Taylor braces himself not to yield. The penetrative influence of Mr. Beecher has not penetrated Dr. Taylor to affect even so much as his form of discourse. He preaches quite as if he lived in a world on which Mr. Beecher's new day had never dawned.

It is an incontrovertible testimony to Dr. Taylor's power, that, being such as I have sought thus to describe him, he should still have won so promptly, and have held so long, the conspicuous place which is his in American public esti-

mation and influence. His successful career in this country is certainly something of a problem and a paradox. Not only does he, like Dr. Hall, occupy a famous metropolitan pulpit — made more famous by the occupancy — but he is, unlike Dr. Hall, a prolific and popular author of books. The secret of a success like Dr. Taylor's is often, to the curious critic, as elusive as, to the prying biologist, is the long-sought, still-to-seek, secret of life. Let us not in the present case prosecute the perhaps profitless quest of a solution of the problem, but rather content ourselves with studying Dr. Taylor simply to take honest account — which cannot fail to be instructive — both of the good and of the less good in his work.

The first thing to strike the observant hearer or reader of Dr. Taylor's sermons, is the firm substance of thought and doctrine that underlies them. Dr. Taylor always has something to say. Perhaps it would be more curiously true to the fact, if we changed one word and put it, "Dr. Taylor always *finds* something to say." For his fulness is less that of the thinking, than that of the acquiring, mind. He purveys from many quarters, but at least he always spreads a full board. And always the fare is substantial. He offers you not the whipped cream and the syllabub, but the solid roast-beef, of discourse. If you do not thrive at his table, it will be for some other cause than deficiency of nourishing food set before you. Perhaps your appetite is not sufficiently tempted, or perhaps your digestion is over-taxed; but certainly you cannot accuse either the quantity or the quality of the provision purveyed.

Indeed, there is here, as happens so often, a vice of a virtue. Dr. Taylor's substantialness is excessive. It becomes heavy as well as weighty. You ask yourself, Might not Dr. Taylor carry all the weight he does, and carry it lightly? His weight of thought, not greater than was Mr. Beecher's, is, ah, how much less buoyantly borne! The fault lies largely in Dr. Taylor's style. But then what is style? Is it not the man? Still, I cannot but think that

had Dr. Taylor practiced improvisation in speech far more than he has, his style might, without loss to its freightage of thought, have become far lighter, freer, less encumbered than it is, in its movement. Its movement is throughout that of written discourse. The sentences are long. Not seldom they are labored and involved. They are sometimes obscure, or ambiguous. The following sentence from a sermon on "The Prudent Steward," in his volume on the Parables, will serve as sufficient illustration:

"When such a biblical student as Dean Plumptre has spent much learned ingenuity in seeking to establish that the steward represents the Scribes and Pharisees in their teachings and ministerial functions, who had been intrusted by God, here represented by the rich man, with great privileges, to which they had been unfaithful, and ends by saying that they were commended by the Lord, who, in the outer frame-work of the parable, is one of the children of this world, we see into what absurdity we must be landed if we follow this principle of exposition."

We know from Dr. Taylor's own mouth that his preference and habit have been to write out, conscientiously, everything that he publicly says. His reasons for doing so are sound, are convincing. But his practice has not secured all the good results at which with wisdom he aimed. What he says is not always as maturely considered as he honestly and earnestly meant that it should be. He, perhaps, has depended too much on his method. The pen, no doubt, goes some way, but it is far from going all the way, toward securing ultimate ripeness of thought. It may seem something strange to say of discourse so laboriously written as is Dr. Taylor's, but it is true, nevertheless, that a character of undigestedness, of imperfect elaboration, is impressed on much that this distinguished preacher has printed. His pen did not make him think *enough*. I have heard that Lord Brougham trained himself for making a speech in Parliament by writing out what he wished to say and flinging his result, sheet after sheet, as he produced it, behind him into

the open fire in front of which he sat to do his work. This process, so it is said, in preparation for the single occasion, he repeated seven times, and then went to the House of Commons and poured out his speech, as the matter came to him and the winged words. No doubt such preparation helped immeasurably the freedom, the impetuosity, of that overwhelming extemporization for which Lord Brougham was famous. But then, on the other hand, the final extemporization reacted to help the orator write spoken style. Similar practice would have tended to give Dr. Taylor the command of a style better fitted than his is for the effects proper to public speaking. The destination in a preacher's mind to eventual publication in volume, for a sermon prepared by him to be given first orally to his own congregation, may insensibly influence the style in which that preacher writes. This ought not to be. The preacher's prime duty is uniformly to those who will *hear* him. If he allows himself to indulge the ulterior aim of making a book of his sermons, he is in danger of unconsciously suiting his sermons to his book instead of to his people. Hearers generally will not relish the idea of having a book preached to them in weekly instalments. They will, instinctively, suspect that the first use of the sermon is, with the preacher, subordinate to the second. But at any rate, the immediate, the congregated, audience that will listen to him from the pulpit, not the remote, the scattered, audience that may listen to him from the press, is the true inspiration for the preacher. To write for the ear rather than for the eye, is, for the public speaker, a maxim of gold. Dr. Taylor writes too much as if he wrote for the eye; but, even for the eye, the result would be better, should he task himself to write more as if for the ear. This chiefly as concerns the matter of expression; though also as concerns the matter of thought the same would be true. Let me illustrate. "The conception and quality of life as affected by the discipline of any form of trial," is the statement by Dr. Taylor of a topic for discourse. This statement is too vague even for the eye;

it is absolutely elusive for the ear. And if anything in a discourse ought to be clear, it is certainly the statement of the topic. What Dr. Taylor actually treats in the sermon of which the foregoing vague language states the topic, is the influence of affliction to change one's conception, and so one's conduct, of life. The topic thus intelligibly stated is perhaps not a topic thoroughly well thought out. But the word "so" at least implies a connection of thought, and a causal connection, between the idea of changed judgment as to life and the idea of changed behavior. Such connection is absent in Dr. Taylor's analysis. The two ideas, that of altered ideal and that of altered life, are simply put mechanically in mutual juxtaposition, no relation of any sort being suggested as existing between them. Here is Dr. Taylor's sentence of transition from the first to the second head of discourse: "But passing now to the quality of life, we may see how that, also, is affected by such experience of affliction." It is even strange that "also" should indicate the only link in thought that occurred to the preacher between revolution in conviction and revolution in life.

But, following the analysis under which Dr. Taylor treats the second head of his topic, you find that it is not wholly "quality of *life*," but partly something else, namely, quality of "*character*," that he means. The "element of strength" is the first "feature of that which we call character," said by the preacher to be "evoked or developed by trial"; the second is "unselfishness"; the third is "sympathy"; the fourth is "usefulness." Obviously this whole analysis is hasty and crude. "Sympathy" is not different enough from "unselfishness" to be separately reckoned; and "usefulness" is fairly inclusive of all the "elements" named. The sermon contains sound and wholesome instruction, but the organific principle is notably absent in it. Such, as I shall presently further illustrate, seems to me prevailingly the character of Dr. Taylor's discourses. They are mechanical aggregations of thought, not living organisms. The cohesion of part with part is often very precarious.

Weight of matter, heaviness of style, imperfect analysis, I have thus far discovered in this eminent preacher's work. Orthodox, staunch, uncompromising orthodoxy, is another deeply-stamped characteristic of Dr. Taylor's preaching. He is contentedly, undisturbedly, old-fashioned in his religious beliefs. The "new theology" speculations find no more favor with Dr. Taylor than they do with Dr. Hall or with Mr. Spurgeon.

But it is orthodoxy rather than scripturalness that characterizes Dr. Taylor. I do not mean that he is unscriptural; but he is not scriptural, warp and woof, as Mr. Spurgeon is, or as Dr. Hall is. Without intending to do so, probably without being aware of doing so, he rationalizes more than do those brethren of his — always, of course, within the strict bounds of orthodoxy. For example, Dr. Taylor has, in the volume entitled "Contrary Winds and Other Sermons," one of his most careful discourses on "The Vision of Elijah." The text is: "And after the fire a still small voice." The preacher deduces from the text, as "the one lesson good for all the ages," this teaching:

"That 'the kingdom of God cometh not with observation,' and that the salvation of the world is to be wrought out by him of whom it could be said: 'He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets.'"

What power of illation was in exercise, to draw just that, and all that, from the words: "And after the fire a still small voice!" The lesson, considered in itself, is, of course, with proper qualification, true; but assuredly Dr. Taylor did not find it in his text until he had first put it there. And putting it there is, if not exactly rationalism, at least unwarranted freedom in the handling of Scripture. In order to reach the foregoing sense of his text, Dr. Taylor had gone to the length of affirming it to have been God's purpose in the theophany to Elijah, "to teach his servant that . . . it was not by such *coups d'état* as that on Carmel that the work of regenerating Israel was to be accomplished, but by the

quiet influence of love." I submit that an interpretation like that, so stated, is overbold. At least, it ought to be put forward less positively. It ought to bear distinctly the mark of being a human guess, and not a thing scripturally revealed. And then there seems to be — perhaps such was not the preacher's intention, but there seems to be — *blame* implied against Elijah for his conduct of his prophetic office. "There had been much about him," Dr. Taylor says, "of the austere and denunciatory." *Too* much Dr. Taylor does not explicitly say, but implicitly he says it, and says it insistently. With what warrant of Scripture? And with what warrant of Scripture is it that, again, Dr. Taylor tells us unqualifiedly how Elijah "*believed*" himself to have "inaugurated" a great reform, how he "*supposed* that God would carry it to immediate success," how he "*expected* that from the moment of his Carmel victory everything would go right?" Such handling of Scripture is not sufficiently cautious. Things like the foregoing, if they are to be said at all, should be said with some qualifying term or clause to mark them clearly as rationalizings of the individual preacher, and not authoritative statements of undoubted fact revealed. Of the same over-free character is the contrast instituted by Dr. Taylor, to Elijah's disadvantage, between Elijah as stern and Elisha as tender in spirit and conduct. Was it not, in this very "vision" of the prophet, told Elijah by the Lord concerning Elisha: "Him that escapeth from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay?" Orthodoxy may permit such rationalisms as those which I have instanced, but true scripturalness forbids them. Dr. Taylor, I am persuaded, errs in this thing unconsciously; for he means to be profoundly reverent; but no less he errs. The error is one of such moment that I respectfully take leave thus to point it out in Dr. Taylor's distinguished example.

Dr. Taylor proceeds to divide "the one lesson" of his text, somewhat negligently, as follows:

I. "It reminds us that in the order of God's government the quietest influence is often the most powerful." (This idea is expanded in a series of illustrations that hardly illustrate.) II. "That the force of love is always greater than that of sternness." III. "That the apparently insignificant is oftentimes really the most important." These three statements of division are not by Dr. Taylor brought together as I have brought them together, but they are by him distinguished, as I have distinguished them, with Roman numerals. It is fair to add that in making the last two divisions Dr. Taylor felt compelled to say: "The lesson which we have deduced from our text, *taken with its surroundings.*" But the clause which I italicize serves rather to give notice of the preacher's sense of difficulty than to justify the violence done by him to his text in making his text yield such instruction. The violence, however, supposed out of present question, and out of present question supposed also the soundness of the instruction deduced, the faultiness of the analysis, logically considered, is surely, without comment, obvious enough from the mere juxtaposition foregoing of the heads of discourse. Like looseness of analysis, as I have said, characterizes the method observed generally in Dr. Taylor's preaching. An ordinary sermon of his is likely to be little else than a series, more or less coherent, of moral and religious observations connected with his text.

While orthodox, in a certain distinction from scriptural, Dr. Taylor is also evangelical, in a certain distinction from "evangelistic." The evangelistic element is far from absent in his preaching, but it is not present with warmth and frequency of demonstration, as in the preaching of Dr. Talmage, for example. Dr. Taylor notwithstanding, in his own individual manner, is nobly true to the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Indeed, he stands strongly erect, a conspicuous pillar and ground of the truth.

That carelessness in literary points which seems natural, but which surely is not admirable, in the pulpit, is also

exemplified by Dr. Taylor. I collect a few instances of inaccurate quotation. Byron's:

"My days are in the yellow leaf;
The *flowers and fruits of love* are gone,"

is given by Dr. Taylor thus:

"My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flower, the fruit of life are gone."

Shakespeare's:

"There is *some* soul of goodness in things evil
Would men observingly distil it out,"

is given as prose:

"There is *a* soul of goodness in things evil *could we* observingly distil it out."

Longfellow, singing:

"Thou shalt know ere long —
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong."

is made to

"Bid his readers '*learn* to suffer and be strong.'"

Shakespeare's:

"They pass by me as the idle wind,
Which I respect not;"

appears:

"The whistling of the idle wind that he regarded not."

Cowper's:

"'*Tis* pitiful
"To court a grin when *you* should woo a soul,"

appears:

"*It is* pitiful to court a grin when *we* should woo a soul."

Shakespeare's:

"One touch of nature makes the whole world *kin*,"

becomes:

"One touch of nature makes the whole world *kin*,"

These things are comparatively unimportant, indeed; but quotations, self-evidently, if worth making at all, are worth making with accuracy. And there is a point of justice and of conscientious habit involved.

"Inaugurated" (in the false sense of "beginning") "*crystallization* of the dewdrops," "marbly" ("cold, stern, *marbly* things"), "pretensiveness" for "pretentiousness," "willinghood" for "willingness," are faults of diction noted. Minor things again; but preachers, whether they will or no, are teachers in such points to their congregations. They have a responsibility for teaching right.

Dr. Taylor's manner of writing leads him now and again into adding to his periods make-weight clauses, which he does not take care enough to justify by freighting them with added thought. For example, of a gymnast's feat, he says:

"For all so simple as it appears to be ["For all it appears to be so simple?"] he is straining every muscle to its utmost, *and the whole man is putting forth his energy.*"

Another example, not quite parallel, is the following unconsidered and overstated generalization:

"When a public speaker descends from abstract reasoning to concrete illustration, and clinches his argument by a pat and parallel anecdote, an immediate hush of eager interest stills his audience into a breathless silence, which is broken only at the close by the outburst of irrepressible applause."

Indulgence in such writing, if it does not spring from imperfect genuineness in the writer as its source, at least tends to ungenuineness. It is to be jealously avoided.

It belongs to the same fault of deficient elaboration in thought, that Dr. Taylor should employ the device of introducing into his discourse scraps of quotation from authors who have treated his topic before him. The preacher's duty is to take up and assimilate what he reads and then reproduce it afresh, if he reproduces it — always and only, with such individual additions, subtractions, modifications, adaptations, as make it fairly his own. No writer, and no speaker, should ever quote to save himself labor. That Dr. Taylor consciously does this, I am far from wishing to imply. But he embroiders sometimes upon the surface of his sermon — in quotation, it may even be (and that is a peculiarly undesirable source of such supply), from a fellow preacher's sermon — borrowed passages, where something produced by himself would have been equally good, and therefore much better, as entered more homogeneously into the warp and woof of his own proper discourse. The sermon on "The Tares and the Drag-Net" has some half-dozen bits of such quotation. This sermon exemplifies a practice not to be commended in the pulpit — and one, by the way, not, I believe, very frequent with Dr. Taylor — that of discussing and controverting at length the views of a commentator thought by the preacher to have made a mistaken interpretation.

The light touch is not a gift of Dr. Taylor's. He is apt to use the heavy hand, without much discrimination of proportionate needs. For instance, speaking hypothetically, and generally, of the value of common sense to the preacher, he says:

"The breach of it [*breach* of common sense?] may not be precisely an immorality, but it is an indecorum, the commission of which stamps him ['a man'] *as an ass.*"

Dr. Taylor's elocution exactly harmonizes with his style of composition. All is effected with weight of stroke. There is almost no relief of tone softened toward the

pathetic or lightened toward the lively. But there is power felt, power made up of mass and momentum.

Dr. Taylor's faults and infelicities admit of being exemplified; but his merits are widely and inseparably interwoven with the texture of what he has written throughout the whole extent of that. His excellence rather maintains a uniform level than makes itself eminent here and there in striking and brilliant quotable passages of discourse. His fruitful industry, his sound discretion, his firm-set orthodoxy, his practical Christian earnestness, his evangelical spirit, his spotless character, are an example and an inspiration to ministers for which we all have reason to be sincerely thankful. If I have spoken frankly of his faults, it is not because I do not joyfully recognize his shining virtues; but because his strength renders him abundantly well able to bear respectful strict measure in judgment, and, most of all, because his example among his fellow-ministers teaches so powerfully as to make it of great importance that it should, if possible, be prevented from teaching in any serious particular amiss.

XIII

JOHN HALL

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE pregnant Greek saying, "Count no man happy till he dies," has its pathetic application in the case of the subject of the following criticism. Dr. Hall, after a long career of prosperity seldom if ever surpassed, in the pastorship of a great church whose pulpit he adorned and rendered illustrious, fell at last under disfavor with such a number or such a weight of his moneyed membership, that in sequel of a manful struggle on his part stimulated and cheered by the sympathy and support of many loyal and loving hearts, constituting, I believe, a majority of the congregation, to hold his place and continue his usefulness in it, he, broken in health, withdrew from his pulpit, and went to his native Ireland where he died. It is not necessary to enter into the details of the unhappy difference that arose between Dr. Hall and that portion of his congregation who opposed him, further than simply to say that it in no wise involved the personal character of the pastor.

Dr. Hall was by eminence a pastorly spirit. Naturally, perhaps, but certainly by habit, he concerned himself on behalf of others, as one who felt responsible for exerting a good influence whenever and wherever he could. I remember meeting him once quite casually in one of the great bookstores of New York City, when, happening to have heard of the present writer's being at the moment engaged in the preparation of certain books treating of Greek and Roman literature, and incidentally of Greek and Roman life, he expressed the hope that I would take occasion to sound in them a note of warning about the corruption that was stealing

into American society through wealth and luxury, comparable to that which honey-combed the old Roman world and wrought its overthrow. He mentioned symptoms of this that had come to his knowledge exhibited in New York City.

JOHN HALL

"John Hall!" Fix your eye on the name. How four-square it looks! Speak it. How solid it sounds! Speak it again. What weight it carries! Once more. How evenly balanced it is! Consider it. What freedom from surplusage! What honest scorn of distinction!

John Hall's name is a symbol of the man. One does not see how the accord could be better. Cubicity, soundness, weight, equipoise, purity, simplicity, make up a mental and moral character in which you can freely rejoice; and such a character eminently is Dr. John Hall's.

I have here, indeed, to speak of my subject only as a preacher; but the preacher always, and in the present case emphatically, is the whole man. Dr. John Hall is an example fit to be, without exaggeration, described as magnificent, of what a minister may become through sheer personal character joined to simple common sense — let but the common sense in him have been, by the grace of God, purified seven times. A double endowment like that for the minister is nobler, as it also is rarer, than genius. Genius, in truth, seems something almost vulgar in the comparison.

It is only fair to admit that in Dr. Hall's case there have co-existed two incidental felicities which are justly to be credited with no inconsiderable share of his actual effectiveness as a minister. In the first place, the fine physical equipment of the man has always with him been a great force working on behalf of the preacher. A stature which would be commanding, but that a not ungraceful stoop at the shoulders seems to make it, better than commanding, persuasive — a wholesome massiveness of person, a face that wins you with sincere complaisance habitually expressed, a voice, sound, hearty, voluminous, flexible, rich,

make of Dr. Hall a speaker such that he has already half mastered his audience the very moment he begins to speak. A cultivated national accent agreeably dashes his speech with the flavor of a difference that you are soon ready to acknowledge is even distinction; you look and you listen, and the ear joins the eye in being flattered and gratified throughout the entire discourse.

The second incidental advantage enjoyed by Dr. Hall is his position as pastor of a metropolitan church long trained to appreciate substantial merit such as his. The place where this distinguished preacher stands year after year, is no small element of his pure and beneficent power. Without disparagement of his own personal deserving, which is singular, eminent, it demands to be noted that Dr. Hall entered upon a great inheritance in becoming pastoral successor to James W. Alexander. It would be high praise implied of its present pastor, simply to say that the great church once served by such a predecessor maintained its rank and its tradition, in passing, after an interval of decline, from under the influence of the one to be under the influence of the other. But the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church of New York City has done more than continue undiminished, it has signally augmented, in power, since Dr. Hall's accession to its pastorship. The debt, however, is generally reciprocal between the church and its pastor; and it must, as I have said, be accounted a special felicity in Dr. Hall's career that in his speaking he has been able so long to be heard speaking as pastor of such a church.

God sovereignly situates his servants according to his pleasure; but mere situation contributing so much as it does to apparent success or apparent failure, it justly tends alike to humility for those who apparently succeed, and to cheer for those who apparently fail, to consider that perhaps in many cases, with simple exchange of situation, exchange too of fortune would take place.

We have perhaps sufficiently recognized what may be set down as adventitious, in the account of things contributing

to the result imported in the name of John Hall; let us now try to find what is intrinsic and inseparable in his peculiar genius and character.

One detects oneself using the word "genius" after all to describe the gift of a man whose chief praise it has been implied to be, that he is what he is, and that he does what he does, without genius. And is it anything worth distinguishing from genius, the gift of common sense so pure and so plenteous as is in this kind the singular endowment of the subject of the present study? The diamond is identical in analysis with carbon — the most precious of stones, that is to say, with a substance well-nigh the commonest and the most abundantly diffused of all existing substances. But the form of carbon in the diamond is finer than the form of carbon in charcoal; and somewhat like is the difference between common sense as it exists in John Hall and common sense as it exists in the mass of mankind. John Hall's endowment is common sense glorified into genius. Still it is perhaps a moral attribute qualifying the mental that chiefly differences this man, wherein he is different, among his fellows.

For though, no doubt, the first thing to strike you in a studious contemplation, indulged with a view to analysis, of the phenomenon that he offers to view, is the absolute supremacy in him of unmixed common sense, still you immediately also perceive this attribute of his — if attribute may be called that which is of the very sum and substance of the man — you perceive, I say, his common sense to be modified, penetrated, informed, with a certain moral quality omnipresent like itself, a moral quality for which I can find no better name than — genuineness. A genuine man, genuine through and through, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, bone and joint and marrow, such seems John Hall to me. He not only does not wish the world to take him for anything that he is not, but he will not let the world do so — if he can help it. And should the world do so, in spite of his own sincere deprecation and protest, still

at least the world shall never prevail to deceive him about himself. He always remains absolutely, admirably, that which God made him to be, never seeking to swell himself out into something larger than his own proper pattern, never making the effort to etherealize himself into an essence rarer and finer than he is naturally capable of becoming.

This steady poise of wise self-estimation on Dr. Hall's part — centred, as I believe, still more on his unalterable moral genuineness than on that rare mental sagacity which is his, refusing to be hoodwinked — was finely illustrated everywhere throughout his course of Yale lectures on preaching. Take, for example, these sentences of introduction occurring in the first lecture:

"In entering on this course of lectures, Gentlemen, I feel bound to declare to you that my own judgment has been overruled, and that no one can have so strong a conviction of my inadequacy to this task at the close as I have at the commencement. . . . Certain brethren, however, to whose views I could not but attach weight, assured me that the general subject of pulpit ministrations fairly came within the scope of the foundation, and that I was not expected to revolve in the same orbit nor to shine with the same brilliancy as my predecessor; that, in fact — though they did not so phrase it — one like myself, a long way on this side of the extraordinary, might be an encouraging teacher and example to ordinary men, and, in detailing how commonplace qualities could be turned, by God's blessing on ordinary industry, to fair account, might guide, stimulate and help students in theology."

It would be a mistake in judgment to attribute such deprecatory expressions used by Dr. Hall to the commonplace motive of mere worldly-wise modesty on his part. They come from deeper in him than that. They reflect his perfectly sincere opinion of himself. They are thoroughly genuine. In one sense, too, they are not only genuine, but just. In point of brilliancy, Dr. Hall is *not* extraordinary. That in which he is extraordinary is something such that he could not know himself to be extraordinary in it and remain extraordinary; for it is a moral quality — it is un-

changeable simplicity and sincerity of soul. But now I have affirmed what no man speaking of fellow-man has a right to affirm. I qualify my affirmation into the statement that such is the impression of himself which Dr. Hall makes upon me.

I would not be understood to mean that Dr. Hall has no oratoric skill of conciliating an audience by modesty. Far from it. Few speakers practice the art of conciliation more variously and more adroitly than does Dr. Hall. The sentences omitted by me in the foregoing extract are an exemplification. I restore them:

"Nor did I labor to persuade myself of my unfitness in order to evade some labor, and least of all, in order to escape an undesirable association. On the contrary, I was much touched by the practical catholicity of the Faculty of this seminary in seeking out a comparative stranger, and one outside of that honored band whose education, intelligence, courage, and Christian worth have made New England what it is, and stamped a New England impress on so much of America. But no eagerness to respond to this attractive overture blinded me to the truth, that all I know on this matter of preaching could be put into one lecture."

How simply and naturally suggested, but how skilfully adapted to win the good will of the lecturer's hearers!

The appeal to local or national sentiment is an obvious, often neglected, resource for the orator, which Dr. Hall, however, does not neglect. With what perfectly irresistible insinuation of compliment, the appeal is unexpectedly made in the following sentences (you must remember that the speaker is addressing a New Haven university audience):

"The young sermon-writer wishes to be full, and fearing paucity of truths at the end, crowds in all he knows pertinent to the subject at the beginning. It is as if he had to write a description of New Haven, and, distrusting his store of materials, he dwells so long on the meadows, with their heaps of hay on stilts, shrinking from the soil that bore them, that he has not time for the

noble spaces, the elms, the edifices, and the material for one of the finest university quadrangles in the world."

It may be reckoned one of the characteristic traits of Dr. Hall's speaking, that he ingratiates himself with his hearers by such complaisances toward them as have thus been exemplified. These things are not artifice with him. They are art, perhaps; but if so, they are art identical with nature. They are the spontaneous upgushing and outflowing of a spring within the man — a natural spring taught by him to spend itself in a channel according to his choice. The speaker says pleasant things because he thinks pleasant things, *and* because he knows that he shall so dispose his hearers to receive his main message more favorably.

How conscious with Dr. Hall is the habitual effort he makes to conciliate, to forestall and disarm opposition, to get alongside his hearer in a friendly, mutual confidence, is well shown in the following passage of advice to ministerial students from his Yale lectures on preaching (the title, by the way, of the volume is characteristic, "God's Word through Preaching"):

"Good preaching should be *persuasive*. . . . Men must be not only reasoned with, but convinced of your good will toward them. They have to be conciliated to unpalatable truth. . . . We should never assume hostility to us, or our views, on the part of our hearers. . . . Let us treat them as learners, keep them as much as possible from the attitude of opposition, and carry them along without reminding them needlessly how much of their previous thinking we have broken down."

To this Dr. Hall subjoins a footnote full of his shrewd knowledge of men. He says:

"The principle of this may be sometimes acted upon with advantage in intercourse with the members of a congregation. Almost every community contains persons who are 'nothing if not critical.' . . . They are delighted to give the new minister their 'views.' . . . Do not let these men commit them-

selves to their positions. Do not even hear, from them, their opinions. If you do, their self-love will set down half your teaching to the effort at refutation."

The spirit of these counsels runs everywhere through Dr. Hall's own eloquence. Never perhaps did a preacher counterwork himself less. With exquisite economy of effort he saves all his strength to be expended on the true point of resistance — on the will of his hearers. Nothing is wasted in the creation of needless opposition to be first additionally overcome.

Do I seem to be saying nothing distinctive in description and analysis of Dr. Hall's oratory? The fact is, that this preacher's true distinction lies in his freedom from what is distinctive. There is everywhere common sense, and that accounts for all. That insures the absence of eccentricity, that insures the absolute conformity to the average human mind. This perfectly normal character in Dr. Hall belongs alike to his matter and to his manner — his manner considered in respect both of composition and of elocution. *Everything is,* on the whole, admirable to *everybody.*

As to style, Dr. Hall is generally clear, generally correct, always simple, often forcible. There is not much play of the imagination, not much working of elemental passion. He only speaks right on. He is well-informed, sufficiently learned even, but scholastic never. He sees the essential point. His aim is infallibly chosen and he hits what he aims at. His statement often is so straightforward and so clear that it convinces like argument. Occasionally his expression of a thought is dense enough and happy enough to have the effect of a proverb.

"We soon cease to do what we do with difficulty,"

is an example. Another example:

"We [ministers] are not, Gentlemen, heathen philosophers, finding out things; we are expositors of a revelation that settles things."

Dr. Hall is urging the necessity of close personal contact with souls on the part of the minister himself:

"No amount of organizing, no skill in creating machinery and manipulating 'committees,' is a substitute for this. *Who feels the power of a tear in the eye of a committee?*"

Demonstration here twinkles into humor. Humor again smiles kindly out in a sally like the following — merrily appreciated, no doubt, by the lecturer's immediate audience at Yale:

"One hears the Hebrew Bible read by theological students with a slow deliberateness that is not all born of reverence for the sacred text."

The substance of Dr. Hall's preaching is Scripture. His idea of his work is to give "God's Word through preaching." To this idea he is, not slavishly, but freely and joyously, obedient. His common sense anchors him to it, and he rides at rest, never straining his cable and never feeling the need of more harbor-room. He is open-eyed and intelligent in his loyalty to Christ as absolute Lord; but he is old-fashioned in it, and not ashamed. He does not care to hide his orthodoxy under new terms. If there is nobody else whom strict orthodoxy fits easily and flexibly like a soft, healthy, living skin, Dr. John Hall, at least, is such a man. Hide-bound he is not, but he will not demonstrate that he is not, by ostentatiously rending the integument here or there. The integument is organically a part of him. He no more needs to part it anywhere than he does to break some one of the members of that whole vital body which itself created the integument for its own inseparable sheath.

A very interesting study it is to read Dr. Hall's Yale lectures with a constant accompanying thought of the peculiar conditions which environed the lecturer. He immediately followed, or almost immediately, that great, headstrong genius, Henry Ward Beecher. Nothing could be

more admirable than the manner in which Dr. Hall, conscious of his own contrast in spirit with his brilliant predecessor, and conscious, too, that his hearers, many of them, were not only, with himself, conscious of the same fact, but conscious, besides, of his consciousness of it — nothing, I say, could be finer than the manner in which the lecturer, thus conditioned, maintained, throughout, at once his comity toward others and his fidelity to the truth and to himself. He conceded everything else, but not one hair's breadth conceded he of what he held to be the whole counsel of God. None but an extraordinary man could have stood there so unbendingly without stiffness; as if the fastness of the rock itself on which his feet were planted went upward through his feet, traversing the whole length of his flexile and tempered spinal marrow. I know nothing anywhere more satisfactory in display of personal character. But it was better than that. It was religious stedfastness for religious truth.

Dr. Hall has not committed himself to print in many discourses sealed to the public under his own *imprimatur* and authority. He has not unfrequently been reported with more or less fulness and exactness. His method for the pulpit is to write carefully in preparation and then to speak freely without reading and without having memorized. This is the ideal method for preaching, but the fruit is, naturally, not literature for the eye, but only oratory for the ear. His great works Dr. Hall will have written on human hearts and published them in human lives.

I know of nothing better from Dr. Hall, to give an adequate idea of his unsurpassed power to seize the true point and pith of a matter and to put this effectively in expression, than a printed "open letter" of his which I shall deem myself to be serving my readers by giving them the opportunity to see — at least in specimen.

The cultivated editor of a great New York daily had published a leading editorial article under the form of "An Open Letter to the Rev. Dr. John Hall." This article was,

in effect, an adroit and specious criticism, of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in particular, but, through that, of Protestantism in general as contrasted with Catholicism, for neglecting the poor and currying favor with the rich. Dr. Hall wrote an "open letter" in reply, which the editor referred to had the fairness to spread out before his readers on his editorial page. It is rarely the case that a correspondent has the slightest chance against an editor — writing in that editor's own columns and of course to that editor's own audience. But Dr. Hall certainly did not come off worsted in the encounter which this editor had provoked.

The date was August, 1875 — about the time of the completion of the present fine edifice belonging to the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. Dr. Hall, having introduced his letter with characteristic shrewd but perfectly genuine courtesy, said:

"There is an undertone of mild censure on 'proprietary churches,' of which you regard the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church as a specimen. I am at a loss to see the grounds of this reflection. Churches must belong to somebody. Is it an objection to them that they are 'proprietary'? Protestant churches are usually built by the people and for the people. Would it mend the matter if the title were invested in me and I had complete control? But this is the condition of things with the churches eulogized in the 'open letter.' The title rests in the bishop; the people have no rights which he is bound to respect; their contributions give them no rights. The bishops can regulate admission and demand an admission fee, and in point of fact sustain their rights in the United States law courts. Is this any improvement on our plan?"

The editor had made a point of the great cost of the new church edifice. Dr. Hall said:

"But the cost of the Fifth Avenue church is objectionable. Why? Should there be a church there? Should it be an eyesore? Or would good sense and good taste require it to have

some proportion to the style and appearance of the avenue? Is it our fault that it required $350,000 to buy a site for it, or that it cost $700,000 more to erect a building at once large enough for a church of over a thousand members, and not out of keeping with the avenue? Suppose we had run up a lath-and-plaster structure on the best part of the avenue, near the Central Park — a more solid sort of circus accommodation — we should have been censured for that puritanical lack of taste that disfigured 'our most splendid avenue.' And as to cost, surely, it is relative. A religious edifice in any American town will cost the price of ten or fifteen ordinary houses in the place, and not be thought extravagant. And the cost of ten or fifteen houses on the avenue has erected the church on the avenue.

"Surely it is not like the good sense of a high class newspaper to single out Protestant places of worship for disapproval, when the erection of other handsome and imposing public buildings is set down to public spirit. Why should railways, banks, and all secular corporations present themselves in impressive structures, and the worship of the Almighty be deemed unworthy of some outlay? If, indeed [the shrewd glance sheathed here at the practice of the editorially belauded Roman Catholic Church, must not be lost on the reader] we begged the money, or wrung it from the fears of the poor and needy, or were conspicuously wanting to all public charities, we might be justly censured. But why should Protestants be precluded from erecting, if they can afford it, a handsome structure for the purposes of their worship?

"But, it is suggested, the poor cannot worship in it. Where is the evidence of that? The annual cost you greatly overstate. If many rich men paid large sums for pews, it has been, among other objects, that the less rich should be able to worship there at moderate expense. It is worth inquiring whether there is another public building in the city that can be visited with equal comfort and advantage 300 times in the year for less than $8 per annum."

Could purified common sense be imagined going farther than the preceding goes, in effective, unanswerable, convincing presentation of a case? Mr. Spurgeon once, as I remember, having been attacked personally, I think by name, on the floor of Parliament, probably in the upper house, replied with prodigious effect in a letter to the London

Times. Both John Hall and C. H. Spurgeon showed in these two newspaper letters of theirs what masters of political pamphleteering, as well as of political haranguing, they would have made, had they given themselves to the hustings instead of to the pulpit.

What fine indignant sarcasm of repudiation for perhaps insincere eulogy offered, blent with what unimpeachably well-bred refusal to insinuate suspicion of motive, is sheathed in the following dignified sentence occurring toward the close of Dr. Hall's "open letter":

"I trust I am candid enough to acknowledge whatever is good in my fellow-citizens of any class or name, but you will not deem it strange that I cannot accept any personal eulogy that appears to be levied off my brethren, nor by silence to admit statements in an open letter to me, founded, I believe, in misapprehension and injurious in their tendencies to great interests."

Who does not recognize in such language as the foregoing the unmistakable accent, not to be counterfeited, of conscious — justly, admirably conscious — personal character? Common sense so keen, so searching, as Dr. Hall's might sometimes seem something little better than shrewdness; but character like his, accompanying and qualifying, fairly redeems it to wisdom. One inevitably returns to the formula, the equation, with which I began. For, indeed, the chief lesson of this eminent pastor's example to ministers and to all men, has been summed up when one has said that he is the incarnation of common sense rectified with character.

XIV

JOHN ALBERT BROADUS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

In a supplementary paper, printed as a pendant to the criticism now about to be given, will be found some illustrative matter, pertaining to the more personal aspects in which the distinguished subject presented himself to those who knew him out of the pulpit.

As to the one instance, quite exceptional in character, noted in the criticism, of what seemed to be remiss attention on the preacher's part to the demands of just exegesis, I may say that I received a letter of acknowledgment from Dr. Broadus to the effect that he had been ready to admit the correction suggested, until he discovered authority on the other side which hung his decision in a suspense of provisional doubt. What conclusion on the point he finally reached, I never learned; but during the subsequent interval of years, I have myself repeatedly considered the question afresh, only to be confirmed each time in the opinion about it originally expressed in the criticism.

The appended supplementary paper was written at editorial request for "The Biblical World," immediately after Dr. Broadus's lamented death.

JOHN ALBERT BROADUS

I HAVE named in my title a man with every natural endowment, every acquired accomplishment, except, perhaps, plenitude of physical power, to have become, had he been only a preacher, a preacher hardly second to any in the world.

A conjectural judgment like the foregoing, it is, to be sure, almost always unwisely bold and hazardous to put forth. I simply record the impression which, after some familiarity acquired with the man himself, seen and heard both in public and in private, and after no little conversance with his productions in print, I find fixed and deepening in my mind concerning Dr. Broadus.

The natural course of treatment for adoption in the present paper obviously would be to attempt the justification of a claim so large, so extraordinary. But the basis of evidence supplied, on which in making the attempt I could found, is, I confess, too narrow for me discreetly to build an argument to such purpose upon it. Dr. Broadus has put himself in print as a preacher and speaker in only one collective volume of "Sermons and Addresses," and his record of practical results accomplished through labor in the pulpit is, tho considerable, yet not imposing. Dr. Broadus is distinctively a scholar, distinctively a teacher, and besides, tho less distinctively, an author. His preaching work has been incidental, rather than principal, in his career. He presents a conspicuous example, perhaps an example quite unique, in the living generation, of the man who, notwithstanding that this must be said of him, yet enjoys, and justly enjoys, among the well-informed, a national reputation as preacher.

As teacher of preachers, Dr. Broadus enjoys a reputa-

tion more than national. For his treatise entitled "The Preparation and Delivery of Sermons" has crossed the Atlantic, as well as made the tour of this continent, everywhere acknowledged to be one of the very best contributions ever made to the literature of its subject. The individual opinion of the present writer is that, fairly judged in view of the whole round of its comparative merits, the volume of which I now speak is not only one of the best works, but by eminence quite the best work, of its kind in existence for the use of the average English reader and student. There may be writers on homiletics who surpass Dr. Broadus in suggestive originality of view, there may be those who surpass him in profoundness of formal philosophy, there may be those who surpass him in elegance of exposition; but if I were asked to name a writer on homiletics who, equaling him in the union and harmony of these different traits, moreover equaled him in alert sagacity of insight, in sure sobriety of judgment and of taste, in breadth and comprehension of treatment, in sympathetic and penetrative tone and spirit — I should be obliged — and it was an important duty of a former vocation of mine to read somewhat widely in the literature of homiletics — I should be obliged, I say, to confess myself unable to do it.

Every characteristic that I have now pointed out as found with Dr. Broadus in the teacher of preaching, is found also with him, and more rather than less, in the preacher. His practice well comports with his theory — comments and commends it. To the thoughtful student of both the theory and the practice of the man, it becomes evident that in Dr. Broadus's case the practice preceded the theory. But it becomes equally evident that also the theory following reacted, as it should do, conforming the practice. There has been free, intelligent, partly conscious and partly unconscious, exchange and reciprocity of influence flowing helpfully back and forth between the one and the other; that is, between the theory and the practice — but I ought to

reverse the order of words, and say between the practice and the theory — of preaching.

One result is that Dr. Broadus's sermons constitute, as already suggested, a very important key and commentary for study in connection with the study of his homiletical treatise. Every reader of the treatise should read likewise the volume of sermons; and, conversely, every reader of the volume of sermons should read likewise the homiletical treatise. The two go together and complement each other.

Another result is that, apart from the relation of text to commentary, of principle to illustration, thus noted as holding between the treatise and the sermons, the sermons independently make up a body of preaching, alas, too small! singularly deserving of attention from preachers as studies in the art of genuine pulpit eloquence. I should not necessarily praise Dr. Broadus's sermons as on the whole among the very best in the world, were I to place them, and I am inclined so to place them, among the very best that I know to constitute models for exemplification of what sermons should be.

The sermons read in print and the sermons heard from the pulpit make, in Dr. Broadus's case, exactly the same impression — that is to say, exactly the same quality of impression. The quantity of impression is double, more than double, when you hear them.

What, then, is the impression which they make, analyzed into its elements?

First, I think, and paramount, is a trait which I must call *winningness*. This trait, this spirit, penetrates and qualifies everything, both in the sermon itself and in the delivery. To say that there is nothing to repel would be an absurd understatement. There is all to attract. You feel yourself treated by the preacher with exquisite respect — not with flattery, simply with respect, but the respect is exquisite. It is the respect of a man who respects himself as he also respects you, and whose respect, therefore, without being flattery, has all of the agreeable, with nothing of the

disagreeable, effect of flattery. You insensibly respect yourself more, not the self that you are, but the self that you ought to be, and that now you begin to feel as if you might be. And it is that ideal man possible, rather than the far from ideal man actual, in you, that the preacher himself treats with such grave, such pathetic, respect. I can scarcely imagine a tacit mutual understanding established between speaker and hearer more favorable for the proper effect of true preaching than the understanding immediately and permanently established by Dr. Broadus with his audience, whether of the pew or of the press, but especially with an audience of the pew. Every personal antagonism that might have arisen to hinder the impression of the truth has been unconsciously charmed to sleep.

Now, were it not that Dr. Broadus has himself expressly given us hint to the contrary, we might naturally assume this peculiar winningness in him to be merely a gift, a felicity, his by nature. The very wisely watchful observer would indeed be likely to see, now and again, evidence sufficient to satisfy him that, within all that soft and silken blandness of manner, there was formidable potentiality of severity, of sharpness, of sarcasm, hidden and sheathed. But, as I have intimated, Dr. Broadus has himself virtually given us reason to infer that his winningness is partly at least a fruit of conscious aim and effort. This, of course, not in any open autobiographic confidence of his to the public. Dr. Broadus is no egotist, gratuitously to open himself in that way. But he lays it down as one of his prime advices to the preacher, Gain the sympathy of your audience.

This intimately characteristic sentiment of Dr. Broadus's finds strong expression even in one of his sermons. In his admirably wise discourse entitled "Some Laws of Spiritual Work," he says:

"Everybody who can speak effectively knows that the power of speaking depends very largely upon the way it is heard, upon the sympathy one succeeds in gaining from those he addresses. If I were asked what is the first thing in effective preaching, I should

say sympathy; and what is the second thing, I should say sympathy; and what is the third thing, I should say sympathy."

It is quite fair to assume that the author of this advice has consciously and sedulously put in practice his own principle. In other words, Dr. Broadus has no doubt studied to be winning. And is it not a true encouragement to us all, to be thus through example assured that a grace so much to be desired is in part at least the prize of honest endeavor?

Dr. Broadus's native sagacity would have led him to cultivate winningness had he been a secular orator instead of a preacher. And what a secular orator, by the way, this preacher might have made! Wendell Phillips, that silver tongue, was hardly a greater. These two might indeed be mutually compared for subtle charm of speech. But Wendell Phillips deliberately chose to be a stirrer-up of antagonisms, while Dr. Broadus, not less capable of sarcasm, of invective, than he, and not less recklessly brave, has chosen, more wisely, to be a charmer for the evoking of sympathies. Winningness, however, with Dr. Broadus, has a quality in it not secular; that is, not worldly; and it is manifestly inspired by a motive deeper than sagacity. It is a moral trait in him; nay, that adjective fails to express it. The trait in him is spiritual. It is distinctly and peculiarly Christian.

The second thing, therefore, to be noted in Dr. Broadus's oratory, is its Christian spirit. I do not now say that what Dr. Broadus inculcates is Christian, tho that would be eminently true. My meaning is that the way, the manner, the tone, the spirit, of his inculcation has peculiarly this character; so that you are affected for good by how he teaches, quite independently of what he teaches. But, besides this, the exquisite agreement between the what and the how indefinitely enchances the happy effect. I must illustrate my point with example. Dr. Broadus had been making an address, very much in the nature of a sermon, on "Reading the Bible by Books." At the close, questions were

asked of the speaker, the occasion being such as to allow this familiarity, and he having himself expressly invited it. The following question was one of those asked:

Q. "Would you not advise much prayer and communion with God in the study of the Bible, in order to a better understanding of it?"

A. "Oh, assuredly, I should advise prayer and communion with God. I ought not to have taken that for granted. I blame myself that I did not say that."

Observe the delicate urbanity of this reply, the meekness of wisdom in it. The speaker might have said: "Oh, yes; but that I thought I might take for granted, in such an assembly as this. One cannot always say quite everything that admits being said." But such a reply, natural enough under such circumstances, would have savored injuriously of the element of self exhibited in the form of self-justification. Besides, it would have broken sympathy with the audience, through apparent retort of blame on the asker of the question. The actual reply was just the proper effacement of self. The speaker's taking of blame to himself, perfectly sincere indeed, has nevertheless, and quite justifiably, the effect of self-exculpation; and yet it amply vindicates the asker of the question. It serves, moreover, to put now the strongest possible emphasis upon the point which had been apparently neglected before. To crown all, the sympathy between speaker and audience is beneficently and delightfully heightened.

To apply criticism like the foregoing, and find so much in so little, may to some seem overstrained. For myself, however, I cannot but think that what I discover in Dr. Broadus's reply, is really all there to be discovered, and that in such a paper as this it is well worth bringing out into statement.

I have been more than willing to take thus a comparatively trivial instance to illustrate my point. The slighter, the more sudden, the more unlooked-for, a given occasion, the

better is shown the instinctive, the habitual, character of the spirit which that occasion has but provided opportunity for a man to display. The introduction to the address on "Reading the Bible by Books," is an example of more prepared and considerate winningness on the part of this orator. A footnote informs us that the address was one delivered in Cleveland, Ohio, before the International Convention of Young Men's Christian Associations. The introduction is as follows. Could anything be conceived better calculated to capture the good will of an audience, better calculated to put every hearer into a disposition the most favorable for fruitful reception of the truth?

"The main support of all individual Christian life, the mainspring of all high Christian work, must be the truth of God. Truth is the life-blood of piety. Truth is always more potent and more precious when we draw it ourselves out of the Bible. I rode out yesterday with a kind friend among the glories of the famous avenue of Cleveland, and then away into the beautiful country region which they hope is to be Cleveland Park some day, until we passed presently a little fountain where the water, coming fresh and sweet and bright, was bursting from the hillside. The water we drink in the houses here from the lake is delightful, but there it was a fountain. There is nothing like drinking water out of a fountain. And I remembered what my Lord Bacon has said: 'Truth from any other source is like water from a cistern; but truth drawn out of the Bible is like drinking water from a fountain, immediately where it springeth.' Ah, this Christian work we have to-day in the world will be wise and strong and mighty just in proportion, other things being equal, as it is directed and controlled and inspired by what we draw ourselves out of the Word of God! I have come to speak to people who want to study the Bible, who do study the Bible, who love the Bible, and would fain love it more and know it better. I am not to speak to Biblical scholars, though such are present, no doubt; I am not to speak to persons of great leisure, who can spend hours every day over their Bible; but to busy workers, most of them busy with the ordinary pursuits of human life, in their homes or places of business, and all of them busy. I have no doubt, in

the varied work of Christian people in the world, that they wish to know how busy people, often interrupted in their daily reading of the Bible, and often limited for time, can make the most of this daily reading. Therefore, they will be willing, perhaps, to listen."

Willing, indeed, and much more than merely willing, to listen, an audience must be after hearing an introduction like that. They are won from the start. The speaker has realized his own idea of what a speaker should do; he has gained the auxiliar sympathy of his hearers.

Let it be observed that I quote the foregoing simply and exclusively for the purpose of exemplifying the winningness of Dr. Broadus. There is nothing else than that particularly striking in the passage. Indeed, that itself is not striking in it. It could not have been striking without tending thereby to defeat its own object — which object was not to excite admiration for beauty of rhetoric, but to create that sympathy between speaker and hearer which is the condition of eloquence.

The next thing to be noted in Dr. Broadus's eloquence is a trait close of kin to his winningness. It is candor. Candor is a very marked trait of Dr. Broadus's mental and moral character. I was about to say of his mental and moral temperament. That would, I think, have been true; but the trait goes deeper than temperament. It strikes down and goes through. It fixes its bite, like that of an anchor, on the basis of the orator's being.

Candor is, nevertheless, as I judge, a considerate matter with Dr. Broadus, a matter of conscious purpose and will. It is even a part, too, of his oratoric sagacity. The orator and the man are one in him, and he well understands how eloquent it is to be candid. This trait is omnipresent, like the kindred trait of winningness, in Dr. Broadus's dscourse. It sometimes produces an effect which you might be tempted to feel as an effect of mannerism, did not the evident profound sincerity of the candor forbid. For instance, it might almost be pronounced a habit of Dr. Broadus, in preparation

for presenting, in order to argue and enforce it, some certain truth or view of truth, to begin by presenting strongly the truth or view of truth opposed, or apparently opposed, and acknowledging fully the weight and value of that. He thus wins the great advantage of appearing before his audience in the light of one able and willing to see both sides of a question. The introduction to his noble sermon entitled, and happily entitled, "Let us have peace with God," offers an example of this. The preacher is about to preach on justification by faith. He will let his hearers understand that he does not regard this doctrine as constituting the whole of the gospel. He says:

"The doctrine of justification by faith is simply one of the ways by which the gospel takes hold of men. You do not hear anything of that doctrine in the Epistles of John. . . . I think sometimes that Martin Luther made the world somewhat one-sided by his doctrine of justification by faith; that the great mass of the Protestant world are inclined to suppose there is no other way of looking on the gospel. There are very likely some here to-day who would be more impressed by John's way of presenting the matter; but probably the majority would be more impressed by Paul's way, and it is our business to present now this and now that, to present first one side and then the other. So we have here before us to-day Paul's great doctrine of justification by faith," etc.

Who does not see that such a manner as that of proposing a subject is well adapted to propitiate all classes of hearers? It is so fair, so balanced, so candid. You are willing to trust your stake in the truth quite unreservedly in the hands of a man like that.

I feel all the time that the examples I offer will disappoint readers, will seem to them to fall short of justifying my praise. But the truth is that what thus far I praise is such in its quality as, from the very nature of the case, not to admit of being shown in immediately striking examples. It nowhere obtrudes, it nowhere seeks to be seen. It conceals

itself rather. It pervades the discourse as the atmosphere pervades space. It produces its effect without being perceived as cause.

Moderation of tone, conscientious carefulness of statement, sound and vigilant scholarship are additional, tho still kindred, characteristics of Dr. Broadus's work. He inspires confidence not only in his intention, but in his disciplined and equipped ability, to be fair. Scripture receives not only reverent, but also enlightened, treatment at his hands. He is a true interpreter of texts, and not a mere user, far less, as many a preacher thoughtlessly is, an abuser, of them for homiletic purposes. Rarely, indeed, will he be found to have assumed the current conventional reading and understanding of a verse or passage of Scripture, without having evidently first subjected that verse or passage to independent, scholarlike examination of his own for the real truth of its form and its meaning. It agrees with this spirit and habit on Dr. Broadus's part that, though intensely the reverse of obscurantist, he should be, as he is, for "substance of doctrine," found everywhere in cordial and enlightened accord with what, by the general consent of the church in all ages, is confessed to be orthodoxy. The so-called "new theology," for example, exercises not the slightest real influence to conform Dr. Broadus.

I feel bound to say that one of the rare lapses from that habit of fresh, unprepossessed exegesis of Scripture which I attribute to Dr. Broadus, I seem to myself to find in a certain section of his sermon on "The Apostle Paul as a Preacher." This sermon as a whole is a most excellent sermon. It deserves special attention as constituting what one might call a manifesto of the purpose and standard of the author's work as a preacher. It betrays a just sense in him of a need that always exists, but that peculiarly existed in the Southern part of our country at the time when this sermon was preached; the need, namely, of holding the pulpit to sober, careful, conscientious inculcation of Scriptural truth, as opposed to the lawless indulgence of individual fancy in quasi-

religious harangue, misconceived to be "eloquence." I should not be surprised to learn that the sermon referred to, supported as it has been by the author's subsequent life-long example, and by his professional teaching no less, had exercised at least a local influence entitling it to the distinction of being an "epoch-making" discourse. It was preached in 1857 — at a date, therefore, when the preacher was a comparatively young man — and preached before the University of Virginia, with the advantage of official relation to that institution enjoyed by the preacher as chaplain.

Because I can so sincerely praise the discourse on the whole, I feel the more free, and, if the solecism will be allowed, also the more bound, to point out what I conceive to be an exceptional negligence of interpretation in this instance admitted by the author. Dr. Broadus treats the text, "For his [Paul's] letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible," as if the contrast contemplated in it were between Paul's style in writing, on the one hand, and his personal appearance and gift in speaking, on the other. The fact, as I must think Dr. Broadus himself would on fresh investigation concede, is that no thought of Paul's looks, as impressive or the contrary, entered at all into question with the apostle's opponents. His "bodily presence" was not in the least his personal appearance, but simply his presence in the body. Paul, absent, expressed himself in his letters as if he would take very serious, summary measures with the disobedient; but when he was actually in person on the ground, he was not much to be feared; he was in act far less severe than he had threatened to be. The context all supports this view of the matter, and it is all inconsistent with the view that has been traditionally taken, and that Dr. Broadus seems, in a momentary lapse of remissness, to have adopted.

It would be easy, but it is unnecessary, to accumulate instances of wise corrective exegesis incidentally applied by this most instructive preacher to texts of Scripture often

misunderstood. A fine instance occurs in a well-considered sermon of his on prayer. Paraphrasing a familiar saying of our Lord, "And if ye who are evil, with all the imperfections of your sinful humanity, if ye know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give good things to them that ask Him. It is not," he says, "an argument merely, as I used to think it was — it is not merely an argument as to willingness to give. It is an argument as to wisdom in giving. If ye then, being evil, *know how* to give good gifts to your children." Such care on his part is, as I have said, the rule. This truly reverent spirit toward divine revelation prevails in his preaching. It is a perpetual silent rebuke of that license in handling of Scripture which some indulge, some even who, in profession profoundly obeisant to the Word of God, nevertheless in practice often wrest the Word of God to make it mean whatever at the moment may promise to serve some certain purpose of their own, supposed by them to be pious.

I have thus far dealt well-nigh exclusively with the general traits of Dr. Broadus's preaching, and found nothing, or almost nothing, except to praise. Is Dr. Broadus, then, a faultless preacher? my readers will be ready, with sage incredulity, to ask. I can fancy the "slow, wise smile" with which the subject himself of this criticism would gently reprove even a confessed eulogist whom he should hear making the preposterous claim of freedom from fault on any preacher's behalf. No, Dr. Broadus has his faults; or rather his imperfections. I make this distinction, for with his ideal of preaching I am delightfully contented; but his attainment falls short at points. To begin with, his style is not all that it should be. It is a good style, it is a very good style; but it ought to be better. Clearer it could not well be; clearer, that is to say, than in general it is, for an occasional sentence leaves even here something to be desired. Take this for example:

"Just a little while after he [Paul] uttered these words [about

divine predestination], from which men want to infer that the man who believes *it* need not feel concerned for his salvation or for the salvation of others, just a little after, came the passionate words of the text ['For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren']. Nor is that all, for you will find just following the text, where he speaks of Esau and Jacob, that God made a difference between them before they were born, and where he says of Pharaoh that God raised him up that he might show his power in him, and that God's name might be declared throughout all the earth."

In what foregoes, the italicized pronoun *it* is not readily referred to its proper antecedent; it even *appears* to have been carelessly misemployed for "*them*" to represent "*words.*" ("His salvation" should probably be "his *own* salvation.") But it is the last sentence of the quotation preceding that I find to be seriously obscure. The only clearing of it that has occurred to me involves the looseness in syntax of making the clause "where he speaks of Esau," etc., the object of the verb "find." The construction is no doubt simply an infelicity of extemporization not corrected in the course of revision for the press.

It is proper now to remind ourselves that any fair or wise appreciation of Dr. Broadus's style in preaching, must be appreciation of it regarded as spoken, and not as written, style. For Dr. Broadus is an extemporary preacher, and these printed sermons of his bear, the most of them, inseparable internal marks of remaining still very much in the same form of syntax and of rhetoric in which, having never been written, they originally flowed from the speaker's lips. This fact duly considered, the style is remarkably free from faults. Faults, however, it has, and its faults are precisely such as extemporization naturally, almost necessarily, engenders. The virtues of it much more than compensate; and of its virtues, too, it may be said that they are precisely those peculiar to extemporary discourse — naturalness, directness, familiarity, ease. But these virtues might conceivably exist without the faults which are so apt to ac-

company them — negligences of various sorts, looseness in construction, grammatical slips, ill-chosen words, and so forth. Careful note of the sentences just quoted will find several illustrations in point. Gleaning here and there through other pages we light on an occasional sentence like this: "None of our divisions of sect, of country, or of race, is half so hard to overcome as was that question of the junction of Jewish Christian and Gentile Christian." "To overcome" a "question" is of course hardly a defensible form of expression. An occasional negligence of the sort is certainly excusable, it is perhaps scarcely avoidable, in extemporary discourse; but Dr. Broadus would have been warranted in correcting thoroughly enough not to let such appear in the printed volume. What is noticeable, and in the highest degree commendable, is that the *thought* with this preacher is never negligent, never hasty, never crude. He does not *think* extemporarily.

Let me despatch at once my finding of petty faults in Dr. Broadus's style. "Among his remarkable combination of mental qualities" is certainly not good English. "With all his abilities and inspiration, men often heard [Paul] without heeding" is a sentence in which the first clause has no proper syntax. "It," is without antecedent, and the antecedent for "them," is ambiguous, in the following sentence: "I am trying to ascertain what books they were which Jesus and the apostles declared to be divine, and I learn beyond a doubt that the Jews who heard *them* understood, without fail and without exception, that *it* meant precisely what we call the Old Testament." "May be" is repeatedly used for "it may be," in the sense of "perhaps." The Scotch form "proven" for "proved" occurs. "Gotten" seems to be preferred to "got." "Cranky" is an adjective rather graphic than in proper taste. "Poor sticks" is a colloquialism of which the same may be said. "It is just wonderful" condescends too much. "Right hard" does not displease, but it is, I suppose, to be regarded as a provincialism of the South and Southwest.

Dr. Broadus deals sparingly in quotations from literature, although wide reading and fine culture on his part are made evident enough. Addison's generally misquoted line, "The wrecks of matter and the crush of worlds," Dr. Broadus gives in its ordinary inaccurate form, "The wreck," etc. "Wreck of matter" expresses a different thought from the thought of Addison, and one too metaphysical for poetry — if rather, indeed, it be not properly an unthinkable thing, "the *wreck* of matter." There might be the annihilation of matter; but matter wrecked is still matter, and that it was, and strictly nothing else than matter, before the wrecking. There may be wrecks of matter, that is, wrecks consisting of matter; but a wreck of matter collectively considered is impossible to thought. The moral of all which metaphysics is: Be accurate in your quotations.

But a more serious example of negligence in this regard on Dr. Broadus's part occurs in a passage adduced by me, some pages back, in favorable illustration of his manner. In that passage he quotes Lord Bacon as follows: "Truth from any other source is like water from a cistern, but truth drawn out of the Bible is like drinking water from a fountain, *immediately where it springeth.*" Here the agreeably archaic and individual expression which I italicize is absolutely the only phrase, and it is almost the only word, accurately preserved by the preacher from his original, which, condensed, reads thus: "This divine water . . . is first forced up into a cistern, and from thence fetched and derived for use; or else it is drawn and received in buckets and vessels *immediately where it springeth.*" This fresh, fountainlike phrase Dr. Broadus remembered, and no wonder. The rest he evolved, as he had a perfect right to do, especially since for his own present purpose he improved upon the original. (He might, I am bound to say, have improved a little upon his own improvement, for instance, by saying, "But truth out of the Bible is like water drawn from a fountain, *immediately where* it

springeth.") What I now point out as constituting negligence, on Dr. Broadus's part, not to be commended, is the *printing* of the passage in such a way as to credit Bacon with language that Bacon never used. The express quotation might have been limited to the one picturesque phrase actually reproduced. The remainder would then have stood for exactly what it is, namely, Dr. Broadus's free and effective report of Bacon's observation — which, by the way, is to be found near the end of the "Advancement of Learning."

After these "small tithings" of criticism, I must guard myself against being misunderstood. I would not by any means have the preacher a purist or a precisian in speech. On the contrary, let him enjoy his freedom. His rightful latitude is great. I have instanced negligences such as I think ought to be avoided. Now let me show an example or two of negligences such as the preacher may feel at perfect liberty to indulge. Here is a sentence, admirable for its meaning, and admirable, as I think, for the freedom in form with which the meaning is expressed:

"People don't know about believing the preacher nowadays, and a great many people don't know about acknowledging the authority of a church as they once did; but the people who come to hear the gospel, if you bring them something right out of the Bible, not a broken, dead fragment, but a part of the living whole, full of the true, divine life, and show them its meaning as God has taught it, and lay that meaning, explained, upon their hearts and lives, the people everywhere respond to that; they like it; they feel that that is good."

Another example:

"When the various writings of inspired men had all been completed and began to be thought of as one collection, complete in itself, and when men began to know that singular and beautiful harmony which pervades so wonderfully all this great collection of books, written by so many men, through so many long centuries, perceiving that it was not only a complete collection of books, but

that they were all in harmony with each other, then the idea grew upon the Christian mind that this was really one book."

The foregoing sentences would not be admirable as specimens of written style; but as specimens of spoken style they are, it seems to me, notwithstanding their inelegant verbal repetitions, and their somewhat formless syntax, worthy of praise. They serve at least to show by contrast what sort of negligences in form I, for my part, would hold to be fairly admissible in extemporary preaching. Such discourse as these quotations exemplify, is exactly in the nobly free manner of utterance commended to the lover of good oratory by the use and example of great masters like John Bright, in the art of popular harangue.

I feel obliged once again to redress my balance of praise and objection. Dr. Broadus, even in his more elaborately careful discourse, discourse which may be supposed to have been written beforehand with studious pains, does not show himself quite so heedful as he might properly be to meet the instinctive demand of the ear in the matter of rhythm and harmony of style. Take this following sentence for example; it occurs in an academic discourse delivered before the Society of Alumni of the University of Virginia. One wonders how the writer should not have shunned the shock to the ear of the "now" here twice occurring in similar places so near to each other, of pause and emphasis:

"It is a thought not strange to the bosom of any reflecting instructor, a thought tending to humility, and yet to honest pride in the true power of his calling, that centuries to come men may recognize as his chief claim to their gratitude, the influence he exerted upon another; yea, that highly and deservedly honored as he is *now*, posterity may remember him at all, only for having been the teacher of one who sits *now*, a modest lad scarce noticed among his pupils."

Charm is present everywhere in Dr. Broadus's discourse; but it is seldom a charm carried to the last, the consum-

mate, degree by exquisite rhetorical form. You constantly feel that the orator is too intent on what he will say to be quite sufficiently solicitous as to how he will say it — excepting always, or almost always, that he will say it in a manner to have it instantly understood. The supreme mood of feeling will, however, sometimes usurp the man, and nature then will snatch a grace in expression beyond the reach of art,— as witness the pathos and beauty of the following passage from a memorial discourse on a young colleague of the speaker's, fallen from his side in the faculty of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky:

"Eight years ago we buried with the deepest sense of loss our oldest professor, who had been with us from the beginning. What a shock, that the next to pass away should be our youngest! We cannot but feel like parents grown gray when called to bury a son in all his youthful prime. It is a mournful experience. God help us. And can I more say? Three years ago the orange blossom, and now these flowers, that vainly essay to smile upon a scene too full of sadness. O pitying heavens, drop down the dews of your consolation; O pitying angels, doubtless ye care, but ye know not, O angels, the sweet, sweet human love, the bitter, bitter human sorrow. O sympathizing Savior, thou didst weep with sisters beside a brother's grave, and thou knowest, thou knowest, O Savior, that here is a grief still harder to bear. O Holy Ghost, the Comforter, come now and comfort. O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, the father of the fatherless and the widow's God, come guide and uphold one who strives to be brave and calm as she leads forth into life the tottering steps of her fatherless little boy."

There is a tradition that Æschines, banished from Athens after his defeat by Demosthenes in the famous contest of eloquence between the two orators, read to his pupils at Rhodes his great rival's oration on the Crown, and, on their applauding and praising it, generously said, "You should have heard the rascal deliver it himself!" And if

the readers of this paper think the passage just shown them beautiful in print, I can strongly say, "You should have heard it from the lips of its author!" There is a strand of pathos in tone, braided inseparably into the speech of Dr. Broadus, which must have given a peculiar all-subduing effect to such a passage of eloquence as the foregoing.

Concerning the structure of the sermon in Dr. Broadus's hands, it may be said generally that it is excellent, judged, as of course the structure of sermons ought always to be judged, with reference to the particular object had in view on the particular occasion. That object is usually well chosen, and it is usually sought with oratoric wisdom. Now and then there seems to be matter introduced which, tho valuable indeed in itself — Dr. Broadus's matter is always valuable — does not belong closely enough to the present specific main purpose to be served. An instance of this occurs in the sermon entitled "Ask, and it shall be given you," where a page of introduction is devoted to demonstrating the absurdity of Professor Tyndall's "prayer-test," so-called. Such a digression in a sermon, vivid in interest at the proper moment, belongs among the things that perish with the perishing original occasion. Again, the introduction to the sermon on "Worship" is one which would be equally appropriate to a sermon on any other subject than the actual one suggested by the Savior's conversation with the woman of Samaria — the introduction consisting of a luminous and interesting comment on the Savior's conduct of the interview, a comment which might perhaps better have been given in connection with a preliminary pulpit reading of the chapter.

The progress of thought is in general manifest and uninterrupted from the beginning to the end of a sermon. I note, however, what seems to be an exception, occurring in the sermon entitled "Let us have peace with God." The preacher closes with the exhortation of his text, repeated as still applicable even in the face of things that might seem to make obedience to it impossible: "Let us," he says,

"have peace with God notwithstanding our unworthiness." This is enlarged upon, and then the preacher continues: "Again, let us have peace with God, though we are still sinful and unholy." If there is true progress here, certainly the progress is not so obvious as it ought to be.

One receives the impression in reading the contents of Dr. Broadus's volume collectively, that the author has made the sermons and addresses here published perhaps in some measure a repository for the ripest and best results of a lifetime of experience, observation, and thought. The sermons do not read quite like a selection of sermons produced in the course of ordinary pastoral labor. They are rich in intellectual and spiritual worth, but they do not make you feel sure that the author could publish volume after volume of sermons approximately as good. The question of fecundity on the orator's part remains an open question in one's mind. You are clear as to the quality of his production; as to the quantity of it, that might or it might not reach a correspondingly high mark. This consideration, joined to the consideration that it is charm rather than power which makes itself chiefly felt in Dr. Broadus's eloquence, alone gives me pause in pronouncing the subject of the present paper a peer in the peerage of the world's foremost preachers. A few more volumes of such sermons as he has published — such, but with the pulse of power somewhat more unmistakably in them — and his title to his rank would be complete. Already, if doubtfully as yet among the greatest of preachers, he is something better than that, unquestionably among the best.

[With the foregoing paragraph, the original criticism of Dr. Broadus, published anonymously in "The Homiletic Review" while he still lived in the full prime of his manhood, was brought to a close. Some fifteen years afterward, he died, and then, at the request of President Harper, acting as editor of that periodical, the present writer prepared for the "Biblical World" an estimate of the illustrious deceased,

which is here appended in supplement to the paper preceding.]

Dr. Broadus, while still living, enjoyed a reputation both wide and high. High enough, indeed, for it could hardly have been imagined higher; but, tho wide, not so wide as he deserved. His posthumous fame is certain to be lasting, for it has solid foundations in personal merit of the rarest quality safely immortal in achievement — achievement which, if not to be called commensurate, is exquisitely fit and correspondent. The fine effect of personality, so apt to be volatile and fugacious, perishing with the man, or at least with the living memory of the man, is, in his case, fixed to a perpetuity of "life beyond life" through books of his surviving him, which, to a remarkable degree, retain secure the spirit, the genius, the refined quintessence, of the intimate character of their author.

Dr. Broadus had what has been memorably called "the genius to be loved." This trait in him was partly no doubt a precious gift of nature, but it was, as the present writer fully believes, in still greater part an attainment of culture. A yet truer account of it would be rendered, if we should use the old language — which it is a pity to surrender as worn out — and call it a fruit of grace. Dr. Broadus was eminently, singularly, a "gracious" person. This character of him was so dominant, it enforced itself so — and this without obtrusion — upon the wise observer, that it is difficult not to speak of it at once in speaking of Dr. Broadus. But we here thus anticipate.

Dr. Broadus was a Southerner, in every sense of loyalty to the local and social environment and tradition in which he was born and in which he lived his whole life. But he had a large mind and a large heart, and he was a truly national man. Indeed even national is a term not broad enough; for Dr. Broadus was world-wide, was ecumenical, in his intelligence, his comprehension, and his sympathy. This, however, in no lax Goethean sense; rather in that

Christian, that Pauline sense, which admits of a genuine, a fervid, a vicarious-spirited patriotism coexisting. We do not naturally associate the idea of exact painstaking scholarship with our conception of the Southern character, even in the highly cultivated type of that character. But Dr. Broadus was a scholar in the severest sense of the word. In the department of New Testament textual criticism, he may be pronounced an authority. His commentary on Matthew is an indestructible monument to his just fame as a thoroughly furnished scholar and exegete. This work is destined to hold its rank as one among those commentaries which, like Dr. Hackett's on the Acts, enjoy both a permanent and a universal fame with New Testament scholars. It would be a mistake, however, so to say this as to leave the inference possible that Dr. Broadus's commentary is not in the noblest sense popular too, at the same time that it is scholarly.

Dr. Broadus's scholarship was not a thing detached or detachable from the man himself. It entered into and qualified his personal character. He was thus not a scholar simply in his closet and in his books. He carried his scholarship about with him. It was minted coin at his command, ready for circulation. Not that he was in the least a pedant. Nothing could be a greater misconception than to think this of Dr. Broadus. But when in conversation a point, for instance, of New Testament interpretation incidentally came up, Dr. Broadus's part in the discussion would show that he had considered the point, had explored and had weighed the reasons, on this side and on that, had made up his mind and was prepared to state his result. Not at all in the spirit of the Abbé Vertot's *Mon siège est fait*, but in the character of a man whose scholarship was of himself, and not simply of the student poring over his books. It was another distinguished New Testament scholar and teacher, a man very different from Dr. Broadus, who, to a request from the present writer for his opinion on a certain point (which must have been scores of times passed under re-

view by him in the class-room) could be brought to make no reply whatever at the moment, except that he should wish to look it up. This also perhaps was very fine; but it was so in a way quite contrasted with Dr. Broadus's.

It was as it were only incidental that Dr. Broadus's scholarship was of the Bible chiefly, and especially of the New Testament. I say "*as it were* incidental"; for, tho his aptitudes for scholarship would have served him equally well in whatever sphere, his profoundest personal bias bent him irresistibly as a scholar toward the Bible. That same personal bias also made him a preacher.

There are, in the whole history of the Christian church, few examples of the union of strict scholarship with genial popular eloquence in the pulpit justly to be paralleled with that subsisting in the case of Dr. Broadus. Dr. McLaren comes near being such an example. He perhaps equals, he may even surpass, Dr. Broadus in scholarship; but, altho, by the joint test of quantity and of quality in printed homiletic production, greatly superior to Dr. Broadus, as indeed, I am convinced, not inferior to any preacher, of any race, in any age, Dr. McLaren, as a preacher *in the pulpit,* has by no means the charm and the power that were the gift and acquirement of Dr. Broadus. If Dr. Broadus had given himself, with the same approach to exclusiveness as has been the habit of Dr. McLaren, to the work of the preacher, and if the outward conditions of life in his case had equally favored, the result of production to his credit in print might have been fully comparable, both in quantity and in quality, with that of the famous Scotchman. But the brilliancy of immediate effect, in usefulness and in fame, due to mere eloquence in the pulpit, would certainly have been far greater for Dr. Broadus. For he had, beyond his British compeer, the proper and distinctive oratoric endowment. If Dr. Broadus, supposed running a career exclusively of the pulpit, might justly have been judged liable to lose something from the preacher's power by diversion to the pastor's office — and toward such diversion his naturally ministering heart

and conscience would no doubt irresistibly have inclined him — the loss so suffered would have been more than made up by the emotion, the "unction," to resume once more an expressive old word, that would thence have been derived to qualify his sermons.

The two functions, that of preaching and that of teaching, were inextricably intertwined with each other in the practice of Dr. Broadus. He taught when he preached, and he preached when he taught. Generally speaking, one would not recommend that preaching should be permitted to intermingle itself with teaching. But Dr. Broadus's case was fairly an exception. He could do whatever he pleased. "Be wise, and do as you will," the celebrated maxim of Augustine could be modified to read, in adaptation to suit the practice of Dr. Broadus. But Augustine's saying need not at all be changed. It might remain, "Love, and do as you will;" so much was Dr. Broadus's wisdom a wisdom of love. His instinct, whether as preacher or as teacher, was a conscious, an instructed, instinct. He knew why he did as he did. He was as wise in the philosophy of his work, as he was intuitively skilful in the work itself. No one can attentively read his treatise on the "Preparation and Delivery of Sermons," without seeing that this is so. His own incomparable art of preaching is therein adequately set forth in theory. "Sympathy" was his master secret. "Get the sympathy of your hearers. Reinforce yourself with their goodwill. Nothing is gained with them till this is gained." Such in effect was his instruction; and such was his own practice. He glided into the good will of an audience with a seductiveness that not so much overcame resistance, as cheated resistance. But all was absolute sincerity. He won good will by showing good will; and the good will that he showed, he had. There was no pretense, no affectation, no effusiveness. But before you knew it, your capture was complete. Indeed you probably never did know it at all. The capture was *too* complete for that. And true capture it was. It was not capitulation to you, in order to apparent captivation of

you. This winning man, after he got you under his spell, would make you hear what he wished to tell you, not simply what you wished to have told.

It was a rare felicity that so consummately good a preacher was an equally good teacher of preaching; that he could impart the theory as well as practice the art.

Such a book as Dr. Broadus's on sacred rhetoric could have been produced only by a man who was himself both a preacher and a professional teacher of preaching. The author of that book in fact taught many successive classes of students the art of pulpit eloquence from the professor's chair. He also taught thus New Testament interpretation. A fruit not yet mentioned here of this latter teaching, was a carefully studied and scholarlike Harmony of the Gospels — a work of such value that no student of the New Testament desiring to be thorough can afford to neglect it.

Of Dr. Broadus, as a teacher by his books, I have said these things. As a teacher in the class-room, I have it to regret that I never enjoyed personal opportunity to observe Dr. Broadus.

This scholar, preacher, teacher, was a man of affairs. He could bring things to pass. He knew how to organize and to administer. Underneath that suave, that gracious, manner, there resided a potent aggressive, executive, force. It happened once to the writer of this notice to see a striking display of the quality in Dr. Broadus thus described. The occasion was not public, but private — personal in fact to the one who makes the present note of it. A certain practical end of much temporary importance, not to Dr. Broadus, but to his friend, was depending. The altruism, the generosity, with which Dr. Broadus gave himself to the securing of this end, was to have been calculated on; but the energy, the vehemence, exhibited in the effort was a true surprise. That one observation and experience of mine profoundly and permanently modified my conception of Dr. Broadus's character. It was more easy afterward to understand the triumph over adverse conditions achieved by this

noble and strenuous spirit in his career, first as professor in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and then as president of that institution.

Besides the reserve of personal force at Dr. Broadus's command for the conduct of affairs, he had a rich store of the most various worldly wisdom (always without guile), a worldly wisdom partly intuitive, but partly acquired. I doubt if his generation included any man wiser than he. To be praised for wisdom by a man himself so wise, was honor indeed; and when a certain well-known man, about whom, as to other attributes than the attribute of practical wisdom, less favorable views are by some entertained, when, I say, that man was publicly pronounced by Dr. Broadus to be, in his opinion, one of the wisest men living, I felt that the force of eulogy could hardly further go. And the eulogy was as deliberate as it was sincere.

Whatever Dr. Broadus became by specializing himself, whether he was scholar, preacher, teacher, or organizer and administrator, it was always the *man* behind the specialist that made the peculiar value of what he was. It was a case of character, still more than of capacity. The capacity, of course, did not lack; it was abundant in volume and in variety. But it was at bottom a moral, more than a mental, power and virtue that distinguished Dr. Broadus from his fellows. Indeed, I think it might be truly said that the clear moral quality in him actually increased and purified his intellectual faculties. He was mentally wiser, because he was morally so clear. His exquisite candor, for example, which was not mere cold candor, but warm, vital sympathy, enabled him to see things far more truly as they were, because he saw them in a white light supplied from within himself. The sympathy which his candor was, not only did not disqualify him for seeing the truth, but it helped him to see it by quickening his vision with pulses from the heart. Dr. Broadus was naturally, I think, a very proud, that is, a very high-spirited, man. There could not be a wider mistake than to

conceive the meekness and modesty of his disposition and demeanor as due to any want on his part of a sensitive honor, a just self-respect. He was proudly and nobly jealous for his own native South; and to me it was a fit and a beautiful thing to behold the fine fidelity to what he conceived to be the fair claims of his section, with which he always performed his office of reconciler between the two mutually estranged parts of his one beloved country. He made no unmanly obeisances. He stood straight up before his countrymen of the North, while he stretched out sincere hands of proffered fraternal fellowship to them. It was a splendid, it was better, it was a persuasive and ennobling, exhibition of manhood.

We should be doing Dr. Broadus the one wrong which of all possible wrongs he would himself most reproachfully regret, not to recognize and proclaim that what in him as man was thus worthy of praise, belonged to him in his quality as Christian. His noblest virtues were not native fruit, but grafted. The original stock was good, that is, comparatively good; but it was the scions implanted that bore that rare and that ample fruitage of refined and beautiful character which we admired in Dr. Broadus. I never knew any other man of whom this seemed to me quite so manifestly, so strikingly, so, may I say it? blazingly, dazzlingly true, as it seemed to me in Dr. Broadus's case. It may be unconscious transference, on my part, from the man to his books, but I imagine that I feel in a degree the same effect, when I read even, for example, his commentary on Matthew. Take the following passage, extracted from what he says on the precept "Resist not him that is evil":

"To resist, to resent, to punish, whether in national or individual affairs, is not necessarily and inherently sinful, but is useful, when properly regulated, to society, and even to the wrongdoer himself; and so it is sometimes a duty to punish, even when we should prefer to do otherwise. But to resist or resent in a passionate and revengeful spirit is deeply sinful, and a sin to which men are so strongly inclined that it ought to be guarded against

with the utmost care. And yet many professing Christians, not only act when excited, but deliberately and habitually avow their intention to act, in the way which is here so pointedly condemned — more sensitive to what the world calls insult and dishonor, than to the teachings of infinite wisdom, the solemn commands of the Divine Redeemer. O, cowardly audacity! afraid to incur the world's petty frown, and not afraid to displease God!

How the impulse of the preacher breaks into the course of the teaching here! But who would have it otherwise? There is nothing perfunctory, nothing merely customary, professional, in this digression into homily. It was not the specialist that spoke; it was the man; but above all it was the Christian. We need to remember how naturally high-spirited the Southern-bred writer was, in order to appreciate at its value such passionate enforcement, proceeding from him, of the Christian duty of meekness. But observe the absence of strain, of excess, in the doctrine. Wise concession is made in favor of sternness exercised when just occasion requires sternness. The emphasis however is left to rest, finally and decisively, on the unworldly, the high, the difficult, the Christian, virtue, grace rather, of meekness. Those who truly knew Dr. Broadus in his personal character, will easily find that character deeply illustrated in this single passage of his writing. It is noteworthy that, although the plan of the commentary provides a place for what is "Practical and Homiletical" under that express title, the remarks above quoted occur, not in a part so designated, but in the course of general exposition. It belonged to the intimate character of the Christian that Dr. Broadus was, to be everywhere and always overmasteringly intent on increasing the sum of the authentic spirit of Christ in the world. That motive makes itself felt pervasively — not obtrusively, but pervasively — in all the product of his pen. The Christian in him summed up at once the scholar, the preacher, the teacher, the man of affairs, the man.

It would be in a true accord with the character and career

of the subject of this paper, if the paper itself should subordinate its memorial purpose to the practical use of contributing something to the end for which Dr. Broadus's exemplary life was lived. The present writer would himself feel, and he would, if he could, have every reader feel, that the achievement here celebrated was real achievement, and not a mere easy felicity of nature. Dr. Broadus *became* what he was; became it, because, first, he had a peculiarly fine and high conception of the demand made by Christ upon the Christian, and because, secondly, he put forth peculiarly ardent and peculiarly constant and sustained conscious effort to answer fully the demand thus transcendently conceived. His method was the simple method, the humble method, of obedience. Christ was literally his Master. He sought to bring every thought of his mind, every feeling of his heart, every word of his mouth, every deed of his hand, captive to the obedience of Christ. The result was what we saw in Dr. Broadus. It was not a goodness and a beauty to excite our admiration and despair. It was a goodness and a beauty to excite us to admire, and to emulate, with hope. But we should not wisely admire, we should not fruitfully emulate, if we fixed our eyes only on the result that he achieved, and failed to observe the method that he pursued in achieving it.

XV

DWIGHT LYMAN MOODY

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The following criticism was written and published in 1898. Mr. Moody was still living, and, so far as was known or suspected by the public, was still in the unbroken vigor of his powers. But within two or three years from that time he had finished his arduous labors and had entered into rest.

As to the question of the persistence without diminution of his popular attractiveness, something was said, in the opening of the criticism, on the authority of a man high in position who had apparent means of knowing from personal observation whereof he affirmed, which, however, called out from another man, ostensibly not less well-informed, a courteous note to the author alleging that Tremont Temple was in fact, to his certain knowledge, not *once* filled full, as described to me by my informant, with an audience assembled to hear Mr. Moody. As these two gentlemen were officially related to one another, and therefore presumably well acquainted, I wrote to each of them, hoping that they might by mutual conference be enabled to bear agreeing testimony on the point involved. From the former I received a note of confirmation for the statement I had made on his authority; from the latter I have, up to the moment of writing the present note of introduction, heard nothing in reply to my inquiry. I leave my original statement unchanged, but I thought it due to fairness to note this conflict of testimony.

DWIGHT LYMAN MOODY

If a series of papers in homiletic criticism should be collected in a volume bearing, for instance, the title, "Some Preachers of To-day and Yesterday," would the list of preachers treated seem reasonably complete, if it did not include the name of Dwight L. Moody? I feel at once that the universal answer to this question would be, No. But ought his name to be included as that of a preacher of to-day, or as that of a preacher of yesterday? He is indeed still living and still preaching, but has not his day of power gone by? Is he not to be numbered among the preachers of yesterday, rather than among the preachers of to-day?

It is not I that raise this doubt. The doubt has been raised for me in comment that has lately started, tho it has not yet gone far, in the newspaper world. Where the doubt was first raised, it seemed to be resolved in a sense unfavorable to Mr. Moody's continuing hold on public attention. But is it true that this great preacher, at sixty years of age and more, has already done his work and declined from the meridian of his power? An incident in my own recent personal experience settled the point for me, and settled it in a sense decisively opposed to those conclusions of the newspaper press to which allusion has been made. Mr. Moody is, I fully believe, still among us in a degree of ability to affect the public mind no whit diminished from what it was in the prime vigor of his manhood. Is there any other preacher living, on either side of the Atlantic, who could, by the mere announcement that at a given midday hour of a given business day he was to speak on a given religious subject, call out a multitude of people numerous enough to fill, to overfill and overflow, the most spacious auditorium in the city of Chicago? But that not long ago happened under my own

observation in the case of Mr. Moody. Of course, it was not mere curiosity to see and hear for once a celebrated man that drew those throngs of eager people together. Mr. Moody had been for many years a familiar figure in Chicago. Beyond doubt, the great majority of his immense congregation had seen and heard Mr. Moody before. It was because they had seen and heard him before, that they wished now to see him and hear him yet again — this, far rather than because they were intent on gratifying an idle curiosity. While I write this, I am told that, in Boston, Tremont Temple is always filled to its utmost capacity whenever Mr. Moody is advertised to speak there. My informant, a gentleman who has his office in the same building, and who therefore could testify from immediate knowledge, does not doubt that the Temple would thus be filled five times a day if Mr. Moody was to speak there five times a day. Statements entirely similar could justly be made with reference to hundreds of large cities in every quarter of the English-speaking world.

A public speaker of whom things like these can be said, and said truly, has assuredly not yet lost his command of the popular ear, has not yet lost his power over the popular heart. It is in the most real sense a topic of living interest, to study and to try to understand the phenomenon presented to us in the character and the career of this noble herald of the Gospel.

In the case of Mr. Moody, the keeping is perfect between the man as he appears in his printed books and the man as he appears in the pulpit. In whichever of these two aspects he presents himself to your notice, an ample, a sturdy, an unaffected, a sincere, an earnest, an aggressive, a quite indomitable, even a somewhat domineering, personality confronts you. Impression of personality is by no means wholly due to personal appearance; tho in this matter personal appearance counts for much. Years ago, before Mr. Moody's long tenure of high estimation with the public had begun to enforce upon everybody a certain respectful reserve in speaking of him, a cultivated, and not wholly unsympathetic, tho crit-

ical and condescending, writer in "The Unitarian Review" thus described the personal appearance of the then much younger evangelist, together with the general impression that he made on such an observer: "A man big-bodied, short-necked, heavy-faced, harsh-voiced, of no culture such as colleges and books supply, poor in grammar, poorer in pronunciation, and poverty is not the word to describe his lack of grace in manner. But——" Twenty subsequent years of development and unsurpassed opportunities of conversance with men and of experience in the conduct of affairs, have transformed the subject of this description into a personage of whom no one would longer think of using such language. Still even now, unrefined is another adjective that one feels tempted to apply; but that adjective might easily communicate a wrong impression. It is not exactly lack of refinement that you feel in Mr. Moody; it is lack of culture and of that peculiar amenity which only culture can impart. It would not be too much to say that of distinctive literary charm, unless perfect clearness be charm, or of distinctive oratoric charm, unless abounding energy be charm, there is not in Mr. Moody a discoverable trace. To assert this is not detraction from his merit; it is addition rather. It is in spite of the absence of these things in him that he makes his way with the public. Nay, it almost comes about at last that it is on account of the absence of these things. You read or you listen, and you unconsciously say to yourself: "Here is a man that practises no arts. He only speaks right on." You are at once and completely thrown off guard, if you had come to his audience, whether of the book or of the platform, bringing with you any disposition to subject him to criticism and to judge him by rules. He does not challenge admiration; and you are not drawn aside from his purpose to consider whether or not he be worthy of admiration. He has grappled you unawares.

I set it down, therefore, as the most characteristic and the most salient trait of Mr. Moody's preaching, and the main merely natural secret of his power, that he puts no barrier of

charm between himself and his audience. Now, Mr. Spurgeon, too, was a very direct speaker. But he had a true feeling of style. It was with him both an instinctive and a cultivated feeling. He chose his words. He loved rhythm in his sentences. You could separate yourself from what he said, to observe how he was saying it. You could admire and enjoy his voice and his management of his voice. A discourse from him might become to the hearer a matter of cool and disinterested observation, for purposes of critical judgment. Not so in the case of Mr. Moody. Mr. Moody's voice is strong, but it is not noticeably musical, and he does not manage it noticeably well. He possesses little instinctive fine sense to guide him in the choice of words. He has no ear for balance or for cadence in his periods. In short, a more entire neglect of form it would be impossible to imagine than is nearly everywhere exemplified in Mr. Moody. Mere neglect, it is; not superiority, not disdain; or rather it is sincere insensibility, unconsciousness — incapacity, one almost feels like saying.

Having set down thus much about Mr. Moody's indifference to beauty in form, his habitual sheer homeliness, I recur to that volume of his works (as these are presented by his authorized publishers, the Fleming H. Revell Company) which bears the title "Heaven," and, lighting upon the following passage with others like it, feel half reproved for what I have said. Does not this well-nigh confute me?

"I have read that on the shores of the Adriatic Sea the wives of fishermen, whose husbands have gone far out upon the deep, are in the habit of going down to the seashore at night and singing with their sweet voices the first verse of some beautiful hymn. After they have sung it they listen until they hear brought on the wind, across the sea, the second verse sung by their brave husbands as they are tossed by the gale — and both are happy. Perhaps if we would listen, we too might hear, on this storm-tossed world of ours, some sound, some whisper, borne from afar to tell us there is a heaven which is our home; and when we sing our hymns upon the shores of earth, perhaps we may hear their

sweet echoes breaking in music upon the sands of time, and cheering the hearts of those who are pilgrims and strangers along the way. Yes, we need to look up — out, beyond this low earth, and to build higher in our thoughts and actions, even here."

Assuredly in such a passage as the foregoing, the indefeasible charm of his subject — a subject, by the way, which has become nearly obsolete in the preaching of the present — has cast a spell upon this plain, blunt man to make him feel, and therefore speak, like a poet.

The result of Mr. Moody's prevailing inattention to form is that his thought and feeling are presented to his audience as it were unclothed — at least, in a state in which form counts for nothing. It is a paradox to say so, but this extreme homeliness works as a positive advantage in Mr. Moody's favor. For what Mr. Moody wants, is your vote for his cause, and not your approval of his sermon. His carelessness of form emphasizes to you his singleness of purpose; and singleness of purpose in an orator is far more eloquent than eloquence.

After being disarmed and captured by the preacher's pure singleness of purpose, demonstrating itself in the absolute amorphousness of his style, you next begin to notice the volume, the abundance, of his matter. He always has something to say. His mouth is filled with utterance. There seems to be a pressure behind his speech as of things crowding forward in emulous eagerness to be said. This might partly account for the rough-and-tumble of his sentences. But the better account has already been given. True, there does not lack here and there the evidence of a mind subject to breaks in its readiness to deliver itself of its message. Frequent repetitions occur — repetitions not apparently designed, and certainly not adapted, to produce an effect of emphasis. They betoken perhaps a certain mental sluggishness obstructing for the moment the outflow of the thought; they may be half-unconscious devices on the speaker's part to give himself a chance to recall what he will next say.

It is partly to fulness of matter in the preacher's mind,

but still more it is to his truly remarkable disregard of form, that we must charge the absence of crises, of culminating effects, of climaxes, in Mr. Moody's preaching. Unless the very lack of art is itself the consummation of art with Mr. Moody, then Mr. Moody is incomparably the most artless preacher in the world. Few, indeed, of the ordinary, conventional, mere rhetorical or oratorical artifices are practised in his preaching. There is scarcely even the beginning, middle, and end of a discourse. The particular sermon is apt to be like so much preaching cut off from an endless reel of such. The piece cut off might be longer, or it might be shorter, and in either case the unity and the completeness would remain unaffected. The conclusion is where the preacher stops, not where the treatment has reached a goal. This does not mean that the conclusion is ineffective. On the contrary, it is thoroughly adapted to the practical end in view, and that practical end is the right practical end for all preaching, namely, the subduing of the individual will to the obedience of Christ. Mr. Moody conceives this end almost as distinctly as did Charles G. Finney in his time. Indeed, Mr. Moody would seem in this respect to have derived from Mr. Finney, whom it is known that he studies with delight, but from whom in most other respects he widely differs. Finney preached the law with appalling power; Mr. Moody is of late noticeably tending in this direction — but for the most part, it has been love and grace that he has proclaimed. But the securing of obedience from his hearers to God in Christ is his chosen end, and that end is by no means lost sight of in the conclusion to his sermons. The conclusion is only not led up to as to a goal not reached before. The goal has been as much in sight all the way as it is when the sermon stops.

Of course, the sermon which has no definitely marked stages of progress toward a definitely conceived final aim — which, in fact, is often distinctly improgressive, and as it were circular in movement — lacks one very important element of power. The sense of advance, the prospect of arri-

val, are two supports to the orator with his hearers, which can not be disregarded without real loss to the ultimate effect. It is the lack of predetermined plan on Mr. Moody's part that gives the character now described to his sermons. It is a part of that general formlessness which has here been pronounced so characteristic a trait of his preaching. Occasionally, indeed, there is evinced a certain instinct in him leading to quest of something like analysis for his discourse. For instance, in treating the passage in Galatians in which are enumerated the fruits of the Spirit as "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," he divides these nine graces into three groups of three each, remarking that "love, peace, and joy are all to God"; that "goodness, longsuffering, and gentleness are toward man"; that "faith, temperance, meekness are in relation to ourselves" ("Secret Power," pp. 78, 79). You might suppose that this division forecast a threefold treatment to follow, of his theme, which he entitles "Power in Operation." But, in fact, nothing whatever is done except with the first group, in treating which, quite unmindful that "love" has been said by him to be "all to God," he makes it an exercise toward man as well as God, quoting the Savior's words, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have *love one toward another.*"

I am far from praising the formlessness which I nevertheless feel the necessity of thus pointing out. It is in itself by no means admirable. But the fact that, without analysis — so needful to most public speakers as a means of commanding material, not less than of arranging material — Mr. Moody is able to abound unfailingly in useful things to say — this, rightly considered, serves to make the more conspicuously signal his truly extraordinary fertility of homiletic resource. Extraordinary, I call this fertility; I mean that it is extraordinary when the evident narrowness of the preacher's culture is duly taken into account. John Bunyan was a preacher and a writer as far removed from bookishness as probably ever was any man that has preached and written.

It can not be said that Mr. Moody is his peer in this respect; but he does not come very much short of it. It is probable that Bunyan was not altogether unread in the religious literature of his time. The Puritan writers must, one would say, have nourished the illiterate tinker's mind and heart. So there are indications in Mr. Moody's preaching that he is not unacquainted with the books produced by the Plymouth brethren. If this conclusion is rightly inferred, he would seem to have profited from what is good in those books, at the same time that his strong common sense, his ineradicable love of the concrete and the intelligible, and his eager evangelistic zeal, have guarded him against suffering ill effect from the nebulous incoherences and allegorizing excesses into which those books naturally tend to run. With the exceptions suggested, there are very few traces, either open or concealed, in his sermons, of the influence of literature on his mind. His intellectual product is almost, of course not quite, such as one may imagine that it would have been, had no literature in any language ever existed. Of course not quite, I say, because unavoidably Mr. Moody, like men in general, has, even when not meaning it, and sometimes without knowing it, received a great deal of light into his mind reflected and refracted from every quarter of the world in which he has lived, and that world necessarily includes literature.

I have expressed myself too absolutely. Both Bunyan and Moody, altho indeed not men of books, are eminently and emphatically men of *a* book — the Bible. To be sure, the Book now named is such in its makeup that it may fairly be described as a library and a literature in itself. It is a collection of books, rather than a book. But call it book or collection of books, the Bible is Mr. Moody's prime source of material, as it is his prime manual of mental discipline. Matthew Arnold, if I remember right, it was, who said strikingly that a man, if he knew only the Bible, could not know that. There is truth in the saying; but its truth is far more applicable when the question is of scientific mastery, than when the question is of mastery for religious and practical pur-

poses. For homiletic use, for spiritual impression, Mr. Moody knows his Bible well — better, indeed, than he would know it if speculation and conjecture, calling themselves science, had intervened to cloud his vision and to unsettle his sense of certainty. He knows his Bible by inward personal experience. He has had, and he has, a personal experience of sin. He thus knows the Bible teaching about sin in a sense immeasurably more profound than is possible to the scientific student of Scripture who is concerned only to find out what the Scripture writers meant by the word "sin" when they used it. He has had, and he has, a personal experience of Divine forgiveness, of imparted peace with God, and he thus knows how it is that God for Christ's sake forgives sin, how it is that we may have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; or, if no one can truly be said to know these mysteries, Mr. Moody at least knows that these mysteries are, in some experiences, facts; and *that knowledge* is a thing beyond the grasp of the merely scientific mind. The Bible teaching about One that suffered, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, Mr. Moody knows as only he can know it who has had the experience of being himself brought, tho unjust, to God by the sufferings of the Just. What is deepest, most fundamental, most vital, in the Bible, Mr. Moody knows, and knows it in the only possible way of knowing it — by intimate personal experience of his own.

The Bible thus known furnishes to Mr. Moody the fund, the inexhaustible fund, on which he unlimitedly draws for the material of his preaching. But it is the Bible penetrated, interfused, as it were qualified, with the quality of the man. That is, he preaches the Bible as he understands the Bible. It would not be far wrong to say that he preaches his own vital experience of the Bible.

Such preaching is indescribably potent. Coleridge said a characteristic memorable thing, in saying of the Bible that to him it authenticated itself as from God because it "found" him as did no other book. The Bible, taken up in an indi-

vidual human experience such as Mr. Moody's, and sincerely and simply so preached, has a *finding* power for the average man beyond what can be accounted for on any theory of mere eloquence. A phrase is here naturally called to mind, which much use, say rather final misuse, has made seem now almost like cant — Mr. Moody has "experienced religion," the religion of the Bible. The phrase thus quoted is really a fine phrase to describe such a fact as exists in the case of Mr. Moody. He has *experienced* religion, and it is the religion experienced by him that he preaches. His preaching is scriptural, but it is also as much experimental as it is scriptural. In truth, a barbarous compound adjective is justified here: Mr. Moody's preaching is scriptural-experimental. The two qualities are inseparably fused together into one quality which our coined compound adjective describes.

It does not necessarily follow, but it is nevertheless the fact, that as Mr. Moody's preaching is in substance scriptural, so it is in method expository. He is no such trained and infallible exegete as Dr. Alexander McLaren. Far from it. Mr. Moody expounds the English Bible, not the original text. It would be strange if a Bible student with no more scientific equipment than he possesses, should not sometimes miss a point in exposition. But the point missed will with Mr. Moody be found an incidental point; perhaps, indeed, a point not to be called quite incidental as affecting the particular text in question, but incidental and unimportant as affecting the main truth of Bible teaching.

I have said that the prime source of Mr. Moody's abundant supply of material for preaching is the Bible. I have indicated also how large is the contribution of material furnished from his own individual inward experience. But, subordinately to his own inward experience — if I should not say rather coordinately and equally with that — his outward experience, in contact with men, and in shrewd but sympathetic observation of their endlessly varying ways, is an inexhaustible resource to this most practical of preachers. "I remember a man in Dublin," "A man came to me in New

York," or some such simple formula of words, introduces an incident the relation of which enlivens discourse with something of narrative interest, at the same time that the inculcation contained is all the more effectively, because thus indirectly, conveyed. The immense range and variety of Mr. Moody's conversational contact with people of every conceivable sort, keeps his quiver unfailingly full of apt and telling illustrations. And never, I venture to say, by any preacher has anecdotical illustration been kept more severely to its proper purpose — that of rendering truth clear or rendering it forcible — than is done in the practice of Mr. Moody. It would not be easy to find in his reported discourses any instance of a story told by him just to entertain an audience; tho on the other hand he might by apparent exception sometimes so resort to a story, when it seemed necessary in order to rouse flagging attention or quiet some beginning disorder in a great congregation.

Mr. Moody, by the way, knows the homiletic value of mirth. He does not scruple to provoke a smile upon occasion, or even a ripple of laughter. But he then keeps his audience perfectly in hand. The amused moment passes instantly. It is at once turned to serious account. It is never allowed to degenerate into self-indulgence, either on the speaker's part or on the part of the audience. In short, Mr. Moody's play of humor, occasional and infrequent, is, like everything else in his speaking, held strictly subordinate and helpful to his main earnest purpose. It is fair to note that this exemplary self-control on Mr. Moody's part has grown more and more perfect with his advancing years — not apparently because the fountain of mirthful feeling in him has in any degree failed, but only because he conscientiously holds the outflow of it more in check.

It need hardly be said that a power of pathos accompanies the power of humor in Mr. Moody. As a general law, smiles and tears are likely to be both equally at the same speaker's command. But pathos is much more pervasive in Mr. Moody's discourse than is humor. It could not be otherwise;

for in a world of sin, and of redemption from sin by the cross, the really sympathetic, earnest soul will in preaching find occasions provocative of tears more plentiful by far than occasions provocative of laughter.

I was instinctively led to speak of Mr. Moody as "keeping his audience well in hand." That form of expression is somewhat accurately descriptive of his habitual relation to his audience. Some orators are the creatures, the playthings, of their hearers. You feel that they wish, that they supremely wish, to please those to whom they speak. This is especially true of actors, who live in the pleasure of their audiences. It is true in a degree of every orator that stands to his audience at all in the relation of actor or entertainer. Such an orator may sometimes seem to "carry away" his hearers, but the conquest is largely fallacious; he wins it by giving his hearers what his hearers desire. More rarely, far more rarely, an orator appears who dominates his audience by a true ascendency of his will over their wills. Such an orator if we may trust Thucydides's representation of him, was the Greek Pericles. Such an orator was our own American Webster. It would be absurd to equal Mr. Moody with either of these two great orators in oratoric genius. But it seems to me a fact that Mr. Moody resembles them in instinctively and unconsciously asserting himself as master of his hearers. This self-assertion on his part is not ostentatious, it is not aggressive, it is far enough from arrogant, it is perhaps not very noticeable even; but it seems to me very real nevertheless, and all the more real that it escapes observation. "Give me where to stand," said Archimedes, "and I will move the earth." Mr. Moody has a firm standing-place, "the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture," and he occupies it immovably before his audience. It seems easy for him, and natural, to wield his audience at will. Strong personality, force of character, ascendent will, may account in part for the effect observable; it does in part account for it; but there is another element of power present and active in Mr. Moody's work which we can only recognize and name without any attempt

to analyze and explain it — it is the synergism, the cowork-ing, of the Holy Spirit of God. "I told Mr. Moody," writes Dr. R. W. Dale, a singularly competent observer of the evangelist's work in Birmingham, England,—"I told Mr. Moody that the work was most plainly of God, for I could see no real relation between him and what he had done. He laughed cheerily, and said he should be sorry if it were other-wise."

A gentleman who knew Mr. Moody from the start in Sun-day-school activity of his evangelistic work, and who is now one of the merchant princes of Chicago, records what he calls a "reliable tradition" concerning the birth of that spirit in the great preacher which, more than anything else belonging to him that can be named, has made him the marvel that he is. According to this tradition, young Moody heard some one say: "The world has yet to see what one man wholly consecrated to God can do." He at once inwardly responded: "I will be that man." The story of his life would seem legitimately unfolded from the germ of such a beginning as that.

In a book entitled "D. L. Moody at Home," issued by the F. H. Revell Company — tho not belonging to that series of ten volumes of Mr. Moody's works to which the volume "Heaven" already alluded to belongs — is contained what may be called a spiritual clinic by this experienced practi-tioner in the cure of souls, constituting as there published two chapters under separate titles. The reading of this Northfield lecture strengthens the impression which Mr. Moody's preach-ing everywhere makes of the enormous advantage for pulpit or platform influence secured to this preacher through his varied and intimate first-hand, face-to-face, heart-to-heart acquaintance with religious human nature gained in the in-quiry-room. To treat the topic thus suggested, as also to speak adequately of Mr. Moody's wonderful common sense and versatile tact, I must venture now to go forward some-what as if I were considering Mr. Moody less as preacher than as man of affairs.

Some preachers in their pulpits immediately impress the observer as men belonging to a kind of extra-mundane sphere of things. The preachers whom I have now in mind seem, on entering the pulpit, to have come from the seclusion of the study. They bring with them the air of books. Sometimes to this appearance of the scholar they superadd an effect of peculiar devoutness, as if their place of study had been to them also a place of prayer. Such an aspect as I thus indicate, especially if it be characterized by the trait last mentioned, has its value for useful impression on an audience. But such an aspect Mr. Moody does not wear. He looks the man of affairs more than he looks the preacher, far more than he looks either the student or the saint. It is true that the unquestioned real devoutness of his spirit has induced its own proper expression upon his features, and has to some degree affected his whole demeanor. He is far from repelling you by anything pronouncedly business-like and secular in his personal presence. Indeed, attentive observation discovers a serene cast of countenance, a composure of mien, which, if they do not irresistibly suggest a habit of communion with heaven, at least are in perfect harmony with such a habit. There is peace as well as power in the eye. The power there is indeed partly a power of peace. Still, the spiritual air, the spell of obvious sanctity, is not immediately and strongly felt in him by the observer. He appears, tho not worldly, still quite a man of this world. He comes forward, perhaps making some little arrangement of the most commonplace sort for the comfort and convenience of his congregation. You are completely disabused at once of any notion you may have had that the sermon in prospect is to be some solemn ceremonial thing inaugurated for its own sake. This preacher is something besides a preacher. He is manifestly a man of affairs. If you inquire in the right quarter, you learn that every outward detail in preparation for the occasion in progress has been carefully considered beforehand; and so the perfection of adaptedness, which, because it is perfection, may have escaped your first observation, is the

result not of happy chance, but of painstaking shrewd forethought and provision on the part of Mr. Moody himself.

I do not mean that every detail of arrangement receives his personal attention. Mr. Moody works through others; and he knows how to work through others, for he knows how to choose those others through whom he will work. He is a general. He musters forces, and then he marshals the forces that he has mustered. His fame for doing this helps him do it. I remember being told by one of the most brilliantly successful occasional helpers ever brought by Mr. Moody to Northfield for his summer conferences, that he was partly attracted to come by the desire to see that generalship displayed on a crowded field of action to which as lecturer he himself, the observer, was now going intelligently and loyally to submit. Mr. Moody has no doubt an inborn genius for command; but then he has had an unsurpassed opportunity of discipline to command. He has perfected his skill in the school of experience.

He began crudely. His chief first equipment was unbounded energy, unquenchable zeal. But these two gifts served him wonderfully. To be sure, they did not keep him from making mistakes. They even urged him into activities that in the judgment of some — and those not certainly all of them disposed either by nature or by habit to be censorious — were ill-directed and rather harmful than useful. One religious editor, the most charitable and the most gentle-spoken of men, is reported to have said of Mr. Moody, in this early period of his career, that he was "instant in season" and — out of season; more often out of season. This editorial sentence offended some prophetically believing friends of the yet obscure Mr. Moody to such an extent that they long refused to read the newspaper in which it appeared. He commenced taking part in prayer and conference meetings — where he had to be checked. At least he was there checked, and for the reason that his participations were not thought to be edifying. He taught in a church mission Sunday-school, where, having been first told that there was no class for him,

he had met that discouragement by promptly going out into the streets and highways and bringing in a class. But his ways did not please those in authority, and he soon withdrew and built up an independent school which became an institution of national celebrity. This Sunday-school in due time developed into a church, the Chicago Avenue Church, popularly called "Mr. Moody's church," which reckons now a membership of some two thousand souls. That Sunday-school was Mr. Moody's first practical experiment in the art of organization and administration. He attracted and selected fellow helpers of his work. The attraction that he exerted was itself a process of selection. Those naturally rallied to his side who would be his fit agents and auxiliaries.

He has himself told us that his earliest wish was to deal with men and women, not with children. But he was obliged to begin with children. Gradually he acquired the ability to address himself with success to those older. He interested himself in the Young Men's Christian Association, and became president of the organization as it existed in the city of Chicago. He found increasingly frequent opportunities to attend Sunday-school conventions and conventions of Young Men's Christian Associations assembling in Illinois and in neighboring States. At these gatherings he speedily won a hearing for himself, and could more and more count on commanding the attention of the public. Everybody knows the world-wide development that awaited such beginnings. It is part of the history of the nineteenth century, that fruitful partnership in evangelism which joined Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey in tours of preaching and singing the Gospel that shook not only the United States, but Great Britain also, more profoundly, and more widely, than could the progresses of any monarchs on earth.

These tours were not improvised affairs, conducted at haphazard and subject to uncalculated chances. They were prearranged and provided for in all their incidents, with as much care and precaution as might go to the planning of a great military campaign. The places of meeting, the days

and the hours of meeting, the preliminary announcements, the seating of the audience, the warming, the ventilation, the distribution of tickets in cases in which tickets were required, the selection of local coadjutors — all these things were looked out for with the most sagacious forethought, the most prudent circumspection. The success was answerable. It was, in fact, overpoweringly splendid. The fame of what was accomplished filled the world.

That proverbial saying which Jesus applied to himself had previously been equally applicable to Mr. Moody; but the modern prophet who was so long without honor in his own city could return to Chicago like a conqueror celebrating a triumph. Cities all over the English-speaking world vied with each other in efforts to secure the services of Mr. Moody as preacher. He has, in fact, appeared in person, to preach the Gospel, more widely than perhaps any other preacher since Paul. Whatever foreshortenings of fame may take place in the long future perspectives of history, it is impossible to doubt that Mr. Moody's name will always survive as indestructibly as that of Peter the Hermit, and with a luster of renown far purer, or, at least, much more unmixedly beneficent, than belongs to that far-heard preacher of Crusades instead of the Gospel.

But Mr. Moody ranks with that class of generals who do not simply win battles, but who organize victory. In the first place, he early learned to reap and to garner the fruits of each particular one of his sermons. This he did by instituting and conducting the inquiry-meeting as sequel to every sermon preached. Carrying out Christ's figure of fishing for souls, he called the work of the inquiry-meeting, "drawing the net." He threw the net when he preached; he drew it in the inquiry-meeting. To fail to draw the net was to lose the catch that he had made. The inquiry-meeting was managed with the utmost wise attention to the necessities of the case. Nothing was left to chance. All was ordered beforehand for each several occasion; but even that was not enough. *During* the occasion a vigilant personal lookout was constantly main-

tained by Mr. Moody himself, in order that no necessity unexpectedly arising should be left unprovided for.

The present writer has very recently by personal observation renewed an impression taken many years ago of Mr. Moody's method both in the congregation and in the inquiry-room. Either Mr. Moody has, through longer experience, become still more watchful and still more skilful than he was previously, or else the observer on his part was better qualified on the later occasion than on the earlier to take in understandingly what he witnessed. Certainly it was a most stimulating spectacle to see the mastership of assemblies displayed by Mr. Moody as preacher when he preached, and then afterward the generalship in action displayed by him as man of affairs throughout the animated spiritual struggles in close quarters of the inquiry-room. While the audience was gathering and getting settled, the preacher's eye seemed to note each individual hearer before him or beside him. There was no effect at all of a wandering eye, or of an eye engaged in considering what numbers were there, or what was their collective character. In short, there was no egoism of any sort observable. The man of affairs seemed simply to be advising and preparing the preacher, to adapt his sermon so as to meet all the practical demands of the occasion, and, "making a difference," not leave any single hearer present without his portion in due season.

While the sermon was in progress, a sense of reality communicated itself from the preacher to the listener, such that no spell was broken when, "Will the ushers please open the windows and let in a little fresh air; it is getting close here," was suddenly interjected into the preacher's utterance. He could even say, "You are getting sleepy while I am talking to you about assurance; I don't want you to think it is because I am a dull preacher, you need some fresh air;" then, after a few minutes' interval, "Shut the windows; I see they are putting on their wraps"— all without any real check to the wholesome serious effect he was seeking to produce and was in fact producing. There would be a slight smile of re-

sponsive sympathy to the gently humorous egotism of the preacher's reference to his own preaching; but no harmful diversion of thought — only the rally intended, to attention seen to be flagging. It was the man of affairs seasonably and helpfully interrupting the preacher.

In the inquiry-room, the same vigilance of heed to existing conditions. Doors closed against further ingress after the room was suitably filled; the appointed helpers, disposed about the room with particular directions given in an undertone to each; a short familiar talk from Mr. Moody addressed collectively to all the persons present; then singing started at his instance by a select number of trained voices — with "Just as I am," etc., for the first hymn — to be continued in a very soft and gentle tone and volume of sound throughout the entire inquiry-season — the idea being to supply a kind of medium, sympathetic in its nature and conducive to a religious frame of feeling, in which conversations of one with another could be conducted, with a certain sense of privacy secured to each, tho carried on in the imminent presence of many, who but for the accompaniment of music might be supposed able to overhear. Without actual observation and experience of such a scene, one would hardly conceive what a help to the general effect, and to the particular effects as well, was contributed by that interfused and circumfused medium of half-silent sound in which all was transacted.

While those who would do so engaged in quiet conversation one with another, Mr. Moody, beginning at one corner, moved in somewhat regular circuit from seat to seat about the room, talking very briefly with each inquirer as he judged fit and requisite. How firmly he kept his lead throughout, a single incident will illustrate. This incident I am able to give as reported by the gentleman himself immediately concerned. He, tho a stranger to the most of those present, was minded to be useful, and, having met in conversation a young wife who joyfully testified that she had a day or two before in that same series of meetings found a Savior in Jesus, he undertook to bring her and her husband — the latter not yet converted,

but in attendance at some remove from herself in the inquiry-room — into personal contact with Mr. Moody. Mr. Moody having, with scarce a word of reply to his suggestion, made him feel — and this without offense conveyed — that he himself was leader, and must choose his own and not another's order of proceeding, imperturbably pursued the course in which he was already engaged; but presently meeting with a case of a Christian in darkness that required more attention than he felt himself then free to bestow, he, with calm assumption of command, beckoned up the man that had just sought to deflect him from his own predetermined plan of campaign, and set this man safely at work where he at least would not be likely to repeat his attempt at well-meant interference. Mr. Moody is nowhere else more successfully the man of affairs than in the inquiry-room. This can not too strongly be said; but the guardian statement should always be added that also he is nowhere else further removed from vulgar egoism and from the trickery of such as make of revivalism a trade.

I have failed at an important point in my representation of Mr. Moody, if I have not already made appear my high estimation of his endowment in the article of common sense and of practical tact. Still, for anything like an exhaustive completeness in my enumeration and illustration of his dominant traits, it seems necessary that I should make separate and emphatic note of these two gifts of his. *Two* gifts, I perhaps ought not to call them; they so mingle and merge into each other that they seem almost one and the same. Common sense may perhaps be defined as that faculty of quick and sane judgment in a man which enables him at once to see clearly his true aim in any given case, and to choose at once the right way, among many often distracting ways that may offer, to the winning of his aim. Tact is that finer form of common sense which extricates a man from the entanglement of peculiar difficulties suddenly and unexpectedly confronting him, especially from the encounter of thwart individualities, the opposition of other wills than his own. It follows

from these definitions that will in a man, self-confident decision of character, may have much to do with what to many observers will perhaps seem triumphs of pure common sense and tact. Sometimes a powerful personality will so overcome obstacles, will so overbear oppositions, as to make a particular judgment of the man acting upon it successfully, seem to have been wise, when in fact it was only victorious. The verdict will be, What common sense! what tact! when the verdict ought to have been, What force of personality! what ascendency of will! Both verdicts at once could often be fitly and justly pronounced with reference to Mr. Moody.

Full candor requires the admission that occasionally Mr. Moody has laid himself liable to a reluctant feeling, on the part of even the most friendly observers of his conduct, that he too little regarded the sensibilities, nay, and the actual rights, of those whom he thought it necessary to withstand or override in public. In these cases the element of will, not to say self-will, entered too strongly for its just equilibrium with blameless common sense and amiable tact. But it is testified of this strenuous man that he is as ready as the readiest to make the amends of explanation and apology, when convinced that he has committed an error of abruptness injurious to the feelings of a brother.

The genius for affairs which Mr. Moody possesses has incarnated itself in several imposing forms which are likely long to survive the man himself. There are the two great schools, one for girls at Northfield, and one for boys at Mount Hermon, a few miles apart from each other, in Massachusetts; there is the Bible Institute in Chicago, a training-school for Christian workers; and then there is the Colportage Association, having its headquarters at the Bible Institute. Besides, there are the Northfield Summer Conferences, which have become a recognized and established force in education for the spread of the Gospel through the earth. The two schools first spoken of are nobly housed in durable buildings situated in ample and beautiful grounds, and they gather large numbers of pupils, received at very low rates and kept

under constant and positive Christian influences. The Bible Institute has a substantial, well-planned, and well-appointed home very near the Chicago-avenue church, and it attracts increasing numbers of students. The list now comprises more than three hundred names of men and women. These learn to do Christian work, not only by being taught the art of it under instructors, but by actually doing it while they study. The Colportage Association employs during the year six hundred distributers of popular Christian literature. All these important organizations, so far as they have a human father, are the children of Mr. Moody's brain and heart. I suppose that with these I should reckon also the Chicago-avenue church, which sprang out of the Sunday-school established by Mr. Moody. It is doubtful if any single man in the latter half of this century, a period of time peculiarly rich in such initiative, has been a more fruitful origin of beneficent Christian organization. Some will feel perhaps that exception should be made in favor of "General" Booth, of George Müller at Bristol in England, of Charles H. Spurgeon. But Spurgeon worked as pastor of a church with an antecedent honorable history, whereas Mr. Moody has wrought, as it were with his own individual naked strength. Müller's example has been far surpassed, in variety at least, by what Mr. Moody has achieved. As to the Salvation Army, it remains to be seen what will survive of that organization after the founder's death. Mr. Moody's educational foundations at least may be regarded as likely to have an indefinitely long future history. But such comparison is probably not wise. All these men would, if they all were living, unite in ascribing to God as the real author, everything that they have been the human means of effecting.

I have not yet spoken of Mr. Moody's achievement as producer of books. This work of course belongs to him in his capacity of man of affairs rather than in his capacity of preacher, altho his books are the fruit of his preaching, the contents of most of them in fact bearing the mark of having done service first as pulpit or platform discourses. The cir-

culation of these books is enormous. From the business manager of the Bible Institute I learned that a million and a half copies have in the aggregate been sold. Mr. Moody's "Way to God" alone has reached a circulation of more than four hundred thousand copies. I was told that no profits from these sales accrue to Mr. Moody himself. The same is, I believe, true of the sales of the "Gospel Hymns." All gains from these sources are turned in to the support of the Christian institutions and the forwarding of the Christian enterprises for which Mr. Moody has assumed responsibility of such staggering weight. That is to say, besides having originated so much Christian beneficence, Mr. Moody contributes to the sustaining of it the income from a literary property perhaps exceeding in money value any other individual literary property in the world.

The preacher and the man of affairs in Mr. Moody are equal reciprocal helpers the one of the other; and this has made it proper to treat so fully as I have done in the present case, the man of affairs, in a criticism purporting to be a criticism of the preacher.

XVI

FRANK WAKELY GUNSAULUS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

A STRIKING thing, perhaps the most striking thing about Dr. Gunsaulus's production, as it appears in print, is the impression of attractively generous personal character in the author, everywhere stamped upon it. The effect is simply contagious. You become, if not actually generous, like him, at least indisposed, partly indeed unable, to judge such a man otherwise than generously.

It is a most admonitory fact, well-adapted to affect seriously any one of us all who addresses the public, whether in speaking or in writing — the fact that, independently of what is said, and independently of the style in which it is said, there is a spirit of the man who says it, inevitably and inextricably entangled in the discourse given out. Perhaps this spirit, obscure and subtle though it be, is more potent than anything else whatever involved, for final and fundamental influence on hearer or reader. We thus touch upon that which is deepest in the doctrine of "unconscious influence" made memorable and instructive forever by Dr. Bushnell's famous sermon bearing that title.

The character of generosity in the man is not less vividly present and impressive in the living eloquence of Dr. Gunsaulus, the speaker, than, as just now pointed out, it is in the pages of his published production.

FRANK WAKELY GUNSAULUS

Dr. Gunsaulus belongs unmistakably to the order of those orators who hold their audiences and establish their fame by charm of rhetoric and charm of elocution rather than by originality and potency of thought. He is eminently such a preacher as is properly placed only in a great centre of population, where he may make up his audience by a process of gradual selection, and attachment to himself, from among the general mass, of those hearers to whom his individual quality naturally addresses itself. He is a powerful, an irresistible, magnet, to souls that have ears to hear such a voice as his. Others than these remain irresponsive and inert; hearing they hear not. It is a wise ordination of Divine Providence, one which should be reverently and gratefully recognized, that there are always hearers somewhere to be found for every voice, whatever its peculiar tone, that speaks truly for the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Gunsaulus has found his hearers in great multitude, and has kept them loyally and affectionately his, through an experiment which should be held a sufficient test and proof of his oratoric merit, for it has prolonged itself without loss to his influence through many years in the great metropolis of Chicago. Thence indeed Dr. Gunsaulus's fame has diffused itself widely throughout the whole land.

"An erect humanity in the pulpit, speaking to the humanity that honors it, trusts it, and provides support for it — how sublime it all is!"

That sentence, with its bold, unexpected exclamatory close, presents at once in small the ideal of the Christian ministry which Dr. Gunsaulus embraces for his inspiration, and which, to a great degree, he himself realizes and represents. Observe heedfully; it is "an erect humanity," and yet it is an humanity that meekly and magnanimously accepts and

acknowledges "support" from the brother humanity to which it preaches. It is a fine ideal — indefinitely finer because of the realization felt to be embodied and present in the speaker who announces it. And then the eloquent, abrupt, unlooked-for, sudden culmination and climax — "how sublime it all is!" What a welcome and embrace it constitutes, for a "function" recognized thus as at once lofty and lowly, to glory in it, to acclaim it "sublime"!

The sentence thus remarked upon occurs in a paper from Dr. Gunsaulus, published in the "Homiletic Review," under the title, "The Significance and Function of the Ministry." One reads this paper and infers that it must have been delivered as an address, a *concio ad clerum;* it would have answered equally well, perhaps it did answer, as a sermon for a mixed Christian congregation.

This discourse is probably as good a representative homiletic utterance of the author as could be selected, to set him forth in specimen at his own characteristic most eloquent and best. The text taken — for there is a text, altho it is not formally announced as such — is Paul's defense before King Agrippa. But the stress of the discourse is laid upon the words, "Who art thou, Lord? and he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest;" and, besides these, upon those other words, "Rise, stand upon thy feet." The title might not inappropriately have been, "The Lordship of Christ Experienced, the True Inspiration of the Minister" — an emphasis resting on the word "Experienced."

One is obliged to acknowledge that the fine oratoric fervor of Dr. Gunsaulus's discourse now and again outruns the exactitude, the clarity, of his thought and his expression. For example:

> "No preacher ever had evangelic power who did not know that Christ is Lord by the indubitable fact that He actually has taken his soul by moral majesty and so ruled at the centre of his life, that while he questions 'Who art thou?' as to a thousand other things, he says in deepest, unconscious confession, 'Who art thou, *Lord?*'"

Instead of saying, "by the indubitable fact," ought not Dr. Gunsaulus to have said, "by an indubitable consciousness?" Exactly what can Dr. Gunsaulus mean by saying, "while he questions 'Who art thou?' as to a thousand other things?" Does he simply mean that, amid a thousand uncertainties as to other things, of one thing the minister must be unwaveringly certain, namely, that Jesus Christ is Lord? If that is the meaning, why confuse it by saying, "While he questions, 'Who art thou?'" If the speaker had not said, "as to a *thousand* other things," one might conjecture that his thought was, a minister may be doubtful about the person of Christ, what his true rank is in the scale of being, but of this he must be immovably persuaded, that Christ is Lord. If Dr. Gunsaulus had rigorously asked himself two questions, first, Exactly what is my thought? and, second, Does this exactly express my thought? he might have made himself clearer at this point. Still the general purport is clear enough: the intimate absolute conviction in the preacher's soul, planted there, rooted there, by a personal experience of his own, that Jesus Christ is Lord, is the indispensable condition of that preacher's "evangelic power"—a noble meaning, well worthy of any man's best efforts to express it clearly and to impress it effectively.

Recurring for a moment to the brief sentence first quoted, I am impelled to say concerning it, that as a mere matter of literary form it is admirable for its straightforwardness and its simplicity. Dr. Gunsaulus is often, perhaps generally, far more involved and elaborate in his constructions — altho in this particular discourse he is prevailingly clear and direct beyond the general habit of his rhetoric.

I have not yet shown the statement in which Dr. Gunsaulus himself sums up and crystallizes the teaching found by him in the defense of Paul before Agrippa, and made by him to suggest his ideal for the Christian minister. Here is that statement:

"The upshot of all his [Paul's] experiences is that of all others

who truly succeed, and it is this: The Christian ministry has its power and hope of making this a better world and otherwise serving God and man, in helping toward an erect manhood — *a manhood which is erect because it has first confessed the Lordship of Jesus Christ;* and thus has been lifted and inspired by a vision of Jesus Christ as the revelation of God and the revelation of man."

Considered in point of literary form, the foregoing sentence lacks something of absolute simplicity and transparency, but let us consider it in point of substance. There is an approach in it to the homiletic doctrine contained in Mr. Beecher's answer to his own question, "What is preaching?" I have ventured to put in italics words, however, that seem to show Dr. Gunsaulus's doctrine in a certain contrast to Mr. Beecher's. Dr. Gunsaulus's "erect manhood" is saved by the italicized words from the too great license allowed by Mr. Beecher's "reconstructed manhood." Dr. Gunsaulus conforms his conception loyally to the teaching and the example of both Peter and Paul; the lordship of Christ confessed is, according to him, as it is according to those two apostles, the indispensable condition precedent, nay, the precedent procuring *cause,* of the "erect manhood" to be produced.

The figure of speech contained in the word "erect" thus used, Dr. Gunsaulus ingeniously finds in the words addressed by Christ to Paul, "Rise, stand upon thy feet." While it is true that Paul's writings would be searched in vain for any inculcation expressed or implied, for ministers or for anybody — to be "self-respecting," as Dr. Gunsaulus does not hesitate to recommend to ministers to be; yet Paul's example in conduct, and his example, too, involved in the tone and temper of his letters, abundantly supply the defect of direct inculcation from him to this purpose. Of course, the finding of the lesson of "erect manhood" in those words, "Rise, stand upon thy feet," is a homiletic, rather than an exegetic, achievement. Dr. McLaren would hardly have been equal to it — at any rate, without distinctly noting that it was an instance of "accommodation."

It appears a really important part of the lesson drawn by Dr. Gunsaulus from the passage of Scripture which he treats, that the minister should be a true specimen of "erect manhood." "The hope," he says, "for an *erect, self-respectful, lofty-souled* ministry lies in what Jesus is and does for him in humanity." [The italics are mine.] The words italicized might seem to imply too much of arrogation, of self-assertion, in Dr. Gunsaulus's ideal minister, to be consistent with the apostolic, the Pauline, spirit of prostration in self-effacement and absolute obedience before the Lord Jesus Christ. But that implication is guarded against with Dr. Gunsaulus by repeated emphatic insistence upon the idea of the supreme lordship of Christ, and of the necessity of the minister's experiencing and confessing this. Somewhat paradoxically, Dr. Gunsaulus says: "We are made erect and manly by adoration." He goes on: "Before a merely beautiful character, a profound moralist, a true philosopher, an heroic martyr, we do not fall to earth in obedience, neither do we rise to our full height at his command." Such language about Christ puts the person using it widely outside the ranks of those who reduce Jesus to human measure, or, which amounts to the same thing, nay, to something still further from the truth than that (were further possible!) exalt man to divine measure, equal in kind, if not quite yet equal in degree, with the divinity of Christ Jesus himself.

In view of loyal expressions such as those shown in use by Dr. Gunsaulus, one may understand in a favorable sense certain things said by him that otherwise would seem to preach too proud a doctrine of the dignity of human nature. "Jesus," he says, "believed in man because He believed in God. . . . No one ever so trusted in man at his worst." That language, taken by itself, reads strangely at variance with the testimony of John the evangelist, who, even of the many that on a certain occasion, believed on the name of Jesus, said: "But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men, and because he needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for he himself knew what was

in man." Dr. Gunsaulus did not, I venture to submit, mean exactly what he for a moment laid himself liable to be understood as saying. What he really meant was, not that Jesus trusted man for any nobleness seen in him "at his worst," but only that He, if He were lifted up, would draw all men to Himself. In other words, Christ trusted, not man "at his worst," but Himself and the eventual attraction of the Cross. This is the rhetorical way in which Dr. Gunsaulus puts it: "He would trust man to come again to Calvary age after age, to find if one drop of His blood still quivered there." A little later, Dr. Gunsaulus says: "The minister of Christ has an unfailing theme. . . . It is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world."

An expression like that last is the expression of a man who believes in the gospel of a suffering Savior, who believes in preaching that gospel, who believes in getting that gospel preached. "The only pulpit that men respect permanently pours forth the music of redemption," Dr. Gunsaulus says. Yes, but does Dr. Gunsaulus say the correlative thing, namely, that men *need* redemption? He does say it, and, still more abundantly, he implies it. "If our ministry is Christian, it surpasses," he says, "the keenest-eyed pessimism in perceiving the historical fact that 'in Adam all die.'" "But if it is Christian," he proceeds to say, "it surpasses philosophic optimism by its discovery of an outlook through the fact that 'in Christ shall all be made alive.'" Dr. Gunsaulus emphasizes the universalism of this by repetition and restatement; "Universal as was and is the disaster in Eden, so universal was and is the recovery at Calvary."

Is Dr. Gunsaulus then a "Universalist," in the popular theologic sense of that word? It does not seem in this discourse to appear that he is not. But one cannot be sure either on this side or on that. Dr. Gunsaulus is generous, and he is rhetorical. If you ask, Which interest is stronger, is controlling, with him, the theological or the rhetorical, the answer must be, The rhetorical. Which, the exegetic or the rhetorical? The answer must be again, The rhetorical.

Which, the logical or the rhetorical? Once more, must be the answer, The rhetorical. Which, the analytical, or the rhetorical? The answer must still continue to be, The rhetorical. Is the rhetorical interest then supreme, even exclusive, with Dr. Gunsaulus? By no means. Truth, fundamental, vital, evangelic truth — that, in the last assay, is undoubtedly the supreme interest with Dr. Gunsaulus. But the ever-present, ever-urgent, rhetorical interest prevents him at times from being altogether as effective as were to be desired, in his unquestionable ultimate fidelity to evangelic truth.

I have indicated that Dr. Gunsaulus is comparatively weak in point of analytic instinct and method. For instance, as to the present discourse; if you seek the analysis of it, you will have to seek diligently in order to find it. There is at length a sense begotten in the reader that, with all the vital movement in which he feels himself involved along with the author, he is not making sensible progress toward a goal clearly foreseen and constantly intended. To be sure, after two full pages (out of five in the whole discourse), you come upon this, which might seem to be a tripartite "partition" following an introduction disproportionately long: "Here [the precise meaning and reference of 'here' is not very determinable] the Christian minister finds himself and his message. Who is he? What is his message? How does it appeal to men?"

"First of all," the discourse proceeds — answering the first of these three questions. But the answer is substantially an eloquent restatement, an intense repetition, of what has foregone. A page of this, and we have a paragraph beginning: "Secondly, what is his message?" Two pages, in which the sequence of thought is not so clear as it ought to be, follow, of glowing rhetorical utterance, in the course of which occurs, without being at all obviously led up to, that declaration already quoted, "The minister's unfailing theme is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world." So far there appears to be a purposed carrying out of the tripartite division

proposed of the discourse. But the discourse ends without any apparent recollection on the preacher's part that he has done nothing with his third point, namely, the question, "How does it [the minister's message] appeal to men?" So far then as the matter of analysis is concerned, this discourse lacks something of being exemplarily admirable.

The vigilant reader's eye, looking over these last brilliant, though not well-articulated, pages of discourse, is caught with this suggestive, but somewhat ambiguous, sentence (the italics are mine): "Without Him [Christ], they [people] will not stay to hear our dream of a better day; and with him, they will not tolerate *our depreciation of humanity and our defamation of the soul of man.*" What ministers are they that thus "depreciate" and "defame?" Whom has Dr. Gunsaulus in mind? I can think of but two classes of such persons in the world, and only one of these two classes is at all likely to have representatives in the pulpit. Cynics may be said to depreciate and defame human nature, but cynics are very unlikely to be ministers. Does Dr. Gunsaulus here have a slant at ministers holding too literally the doctrine of "total depravity," as the (by himself recognized) fallen condition in man used unhappily to be called? If so, the slant was unnecessary in these times when the danger is all the other way, and human nature is far more likely to be overpraised than to be overblamed. From that greater danger, Dr. Gunsaulus, with his generous spirit and his amiable fondness for being in sympathy with his fellows, does not himself enjoy complete immunity, as several expressions in the present discourse sufficiently show.

I am led thus to remark that whereas some orators, a few, a very few — those perhaps the greatest, as *men,* if not to be rated greatest distinctively as orators — exert their influence by dominating their hearers, there are others, a more numerous class, who exert their influence by attracting, persuading. Persuasive, rather than dominating, is Dr. Gunsaulus's gift in eloquence. Whether he would rise equal to an occasion requiring heroic encounter and challenge of a haughty popular

mood, nothing but a practical test could satisfactorily prove, either to himself or to others. The courage would probably not be wanting, nor the willingness to sacrifice material self-interest; but could Dr. Gunsaulus bring himself to deny his fellows that complaisance which he instinctively wishes to yield? Would he, or would he not, be irresistibly swept himself into the popular current that a man of different make would feel it his duty to stem? These questions are started in the mind, but answer to them there is none to be had — till some crucial experiment is reached. Even while engaged in reading the proof of this paper for publication in volume, I learn something to the present point, from a wisely discriminating occasional observer of Dr. Gunsaulus's preaching. This gentleman tells me that on a certain occasion he heard Dr. Gunsaulus address point blank to rich men present in his audience the boldest possible arraignment of their spirit and behavior — a display of courage, so my informant thought, more noteworthy than would have been a challenge of the populace, since it was precisely upon such rich men that this preacher must rely for his support.

Dr. Gunsaulus shows some ambition, and some true capacity, of scholarship, and in general a good tone of taste prevails throughout his production. It accordingly reads out of harmony with the pure tenor of his text — such a condescension as the following toward a turn of phrase which, if not quite slang, is at least too familiar [italics mine]: "He [Christ] is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins [sin] of the world. *He worked His divinity for all there was in it,* in His struggle with the undivine." "Undivine" is a coinage not characteristic of Dr. Gunsaulus's diction. It is a carelessness, and at the same time a suspicion of affectation, when he speaks of the "moral beauty" of Jesus, and then, in the same sentence, of "its very beautifulness." The "beautifulness" of "beauty"?

The attentive reader of this paper will not have failed to observe that the brief extracts shown from the discourse examined evince a buoyancy toward the poetic in Dr. Gunsau-

lus's rhetoric. The native poetic instinct in him, Dr. Gunsaulus has in fact indulged in the open form of verse to an extent sufficient to make a volume. A minor key of pathos may, I think, be felt in his production, a pathos which is far enough from pessimism, but which suggests that his own personal experience of life has taken him below the surface of things some way down into the deep heart of the mystery of the world, its sin and its sorrow. An undertone of the "still sad music of humanity" makes itself heard in his discourse, if the ear that listens is sensitive. At once poetic and pathetic, subtly pathetic, is a sentence like this: "Christ had taken him [Paul], as the sovereign harmony takes the wandering tone."

If the chances, as we call them, of life, had given Dr. Gunsaulus's poetic bent the advantage over his homiletic, and made him a poet instead of a preacher, would he have achieved an equally eminent and equally useful career? Perhaps; but in that case he would still have been preacher, besides being poet, just as now he is poet besides being preacher.

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XVII

WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Without purpose, even without thought, on the writer's part, of either including or excluding subjects of criticism on the ground of denominational affiliation, he had in fact, as he could not but at length observe, made up his list of eminent preachers to be criticised by him with no name in it representative of the great Methodist body. It wore almost a look of intentional adverse discrimination. It was at once resolved that the collective volume at least should take away such apparent openness to reproach.

But immediately then a difficulty presented itself. With a wealth of equipment in eloquent voices, suggested when names among the living like those of Bishop Fowler, Bishop Vincent, Chancellor Day, Dr. Buckley, are called to mind, the Methodist ministry has not recently contributed many noteworthy books of sermons to homiletic literature; and to criticise preaching without being able to refer readers to printed production in specimen, did not seem to promise the amount of edifying result that was desirable.

On the whole, after taking counsel with the one man in "Methodism," who, if the question were of journalism, and not of preaching, would instantly preclude all thought of competition for the foremost place, the writer decided, with that one man's approval of his choice, to present the name of William Morley Punshon as representative of the modern Methodist pulpit.

WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON

Among Methodist preachers of recent time, two names, one English, one American, stand out to the general Christian public as by eminence of the widest and most brilliant fame. Those two names are William Morley Punshon and Matthew Simpson. That the Englishman rather than the American should be selected as the representative Methodist preacher to be treated of here, may be credited to the fact that the Englishman's authorized product in print is more considerable than the American's.

The present writer's opportunity for personal observation of the living orator, has been limited in both these two cases; but it has been exactly equal in the two. Equal in amount, but, in point of favorableness for the speaker, found in the two respective occasions of their oratory, very unequal. Bishop Simpson was, as I suppose, at his best when I heard him; at any rate, he was not below his own average of eloquence. Mr. Punshon, on the other hand, when I heard him, was put by circumstances at great comparative disadvantage, and he probably presented himself on that occasion as little brilliantly as ever he could have done on any. If therefore there is help to be derived for judging justly of an orator from seeing him and hearing him at his worst instead of his best, I may count myself, to that extent at least, qualified by observation to form a true estimate of Mr. Punshon's oratoric quality. The occasion referred to was this:

The Wesleyan anniversaries were in progress at Exeter Hall in London. The day was the great day of the feast, the day devoted to the missionary society. Mr. Punshon was announced as one of the speakers, and of course he was *the* speaker. The attendance was crowded, but my American quality procured me admission to an eligible seat on the plat-

form. To an American stranger the scene was full of interest. Many in the audience came prepared to hold their seats all day long, bringing substantial luncheon with them. The day had waned away to late afternoon, and still Mr. Punshon was held in reserve. A Mr. James, of whom I knew nothing, and from whom, as I guessed, little was expected by the audience, immediately preceded Mr. Punshon on the program. The audience had become weary and languid, and I could not but feel sympathy for Mr. James, destined victim to be sacrificed on the altar of that audience's impatience to hear Mr. Punshon.

Mr. James began as if he had something to say, and furthermore as if he was going to say it whether men would hear or forbear. Men for the most part forbore. But he went on as if unconscious of not being listened to. The fact was rather perhaps that he was conscious that he would be listened to. And listened to he very soon was, by here and there a person in the audience. That person here and there proved a nucleus for a group of listeners. The groups multiplied, and presently became confluent, embracing the whole concourse. From listening merely, they soon listened with interest. The interest intensified and broke into sporadic applauses. These applauses did not check for one instant the speaker's momentum. He poured his discourse impetuously forward, an uninterrupted stream, through all the applauses. The applauses grew general, grew enthusiastic, grew wild. They were irresistibly contagious. They took in even the indifferent ushers, armed especially for effective demonstration with their long, stout staves of office. With these staves they resonantly pounded the floor, changing hands occasionally to ease themselves and pound the harder, while their handkerchiefs — one instance at least like this occurred — that happened to be held in their hands, flew whimsically up and down, in unintended visible reinforcement of their very much intended audible demonstration. The speaker meantime was rushing on in his torrent of oratory — not the least pause for all that tempestuous re-

sponse to his eloquence. I never before witnessed such a scene; I have never witnessed quite such a scene since. If I had previously been sorry for this speaker, I was now sorry for the speaker that was to follow him.

Unwilling to rely absolutely on my unassisted memory of so many years ago, I took the precaution, in preparing the present paper, to appeal, across the Atlantic, for correction or for confirmation of my impression as to the occasion thus described, to a gentleman in London who, from his long close relation to men and things in English Wesleyanism, would be sure to know the facts as they were. He courteously replied, confirming my impression at every material point. He wrote: "The speech you heard made a great impression. I do not wonder. I have just looked at a full report of it in a bound volume of 'The Watchman' newspaper." My correspondent also said: "Mr. Alex. T. James was a very eloquent man. He died prematurely." If he had not died prematurely, perhaps he, instead of Mr. Punshon, would have been the proper choice of subject to be treated in this series of criticisms.

Mr. Punshon did not meet successfully the emergency in which he found himself involved. Whether, as will sometimes happen with even the most experienced public speaker (witness Cicero, philosophically treating of oratory), he lost his presence of mind, or, what is less likely, for Punshon seems to have been a sincerely modest man, overestimated his own oratoric powers — however influenced, he made the great mistake of beginning with his audience, or attempting to begin with them, on the same lofty level of feeling to which Mr. James had gradually brought them and on which he turned them over to the speaker following him. The result was inevitable. Mr. Punshon labored through his brilliant rhetoric with manful courage, but to no effect satisfactory either to himself or to his admiring hearers. In short, Mr. Punshon may be considered to have made a failure on that occasion, if he could be admitted ever to have made a failure on any.

What ought Mr. Punshon to have done instead of what he did do? It was perhaps a case in which there was nothing likely to be successful, open to a speaker of precisely Mr. Punshon's quality. Mr. Punshon was, by nature and by habit, a rhetorician rather than an orator. He had probably written out in full and memorized the address he was to make. With conditions favorable, his elocution, which corresponded happily to his rhetorical style, would have carried off his address brilliantly and achieved for him his usual splendid popular success. I conjecture that he had not at command the resources which would have enabled him to adjust himself to unexpected adverse conditions. Still, if he had asked his audience to join in singing a hymn, selected for its fitness to what they had just heard, that simple transition interposed might have had the effect to ease them gratefully of the tension to which they had been wrought, and to dispose them favorably toward listening to eloquence of a different mood from that of the address which had just been delighting them so.

Many years after, I was present as observer on a somewhat similar occasion, which confronted a certain speaker with a somewhat similar emergency. He met it in a very different manner. One of the most illustrious of living foreign missionaries, a man of commanding character and commanding personal presence, had made, that evening, a long but not too long, truly majestic address that held the audience spellbound with a kind of awe as well as with admiration and delight. The weather was very warm and, what with lengthened introductory exercises, the hour was now late when this speaker closed his address. It must have been well toward ten o'clock. The second announced speaker was a favorite of many years with all audiences of his religious denomination. When he was called to the platform, he very wisely said that at such an hour he would not think of disturbing the impression made by the noble address to which they had all listened with delight — with which words he turned to retire from the platform. But the audience would

not have it so. Cries of "Go on! Go on!" went up from here and there a place in the crowded auditorium. The speaker shook his head in deprecation, and the cries grew in number and in earnestness. Still, the speaker, bowing thanks and deprecation, kept on retiring from the platform. "Retired, the more desirable," expresses what seemed to be the sentiment of the audience. As with one voice, they cried out, "No, no! Go on, go on!" They were now fairly committed to be a well-behaved audience, patient at least to hear the speaker whom they had with complaisance refused to excuse from speaking. Responsibility for the result was thus, as it were, shifted from the speaker to his hearers, and, with some words delicately hinting that such was the case, the speaker deferred to his audience and made his address. By the passage of back and forth thus introduced between himself and his audience, the speaker had successfully transposed their mood to a mood of preparedness to hear him favorably. This they did, to such effect that at the end of a long address they were keyed up again to a height of feeling, different indeed from that in which the preceding speaker had left them, but certainly not less enthusiastic and demonstrative. The missionary of this occasion was Dr. William Ashmore, and the speaker that followed was the late Dr. George C. Lorimer.

Dr. Lorimer, had his occasion been such as to admit it — which of course it was not — I can easily imagine, resourceful as he was, striking out a strain of improvised pleasantry, before beginning his address, and thus, to his own oratorical advantage, relaxing with laughter the high-wrought mood of his audience. Mr. Punshon, I judge, had not at command a vein of humor or wit on which he could draw at will, even when he was perfectly self-possessed. But the modulation from grave to gay, and then back again from lively to severe, before an audience, is one to be managed with the greatest good judgment and tact. It would be unfair to infer from the one instance described of Mr. Punshon's failure to convert adverse conditions into opportunity

and triumph, that he might not prove generally master of the situation, whatever it should be.

In characterization of Mr. Punshon's published sermons and addresses, it deserves to be said, first and most emphatically, that they are throughout "all compact" of gospel pure and undefiled. The note of absolute loyalty to Scripture is everywhere clearly heard, and it is as clearly everywhere the dominant note. To the lover of evangelic truth needing no flavor of "advanced" thought to commend it to his relish, this character in Mr. Punshon's utterances is an immense satisfaction. Mr. Spurgeon himself was not more straitly orthodox than was Mr. Punshon. Barring the difference between them of Calvinistic and Arminian, the two men preached one and the same gospel, and together bore agreeing testimony to the inspiration and authority of the Bible as being throughout, from Genesis to Revelation, the unmixed Word of God.

Having thus brought together these two great contemporary preachers, to point out an important fundamental resemblance between them, I find myself now disposed to point out a particular in which they seem to me to exhibit a remarkable mutual contrast — a contrast to be sure in form rather than in substance, and yet a remarkable contrast. Mr. George C. Robinson was a highly cultivated young Methodist preacher, of the most gracious character and of the most brilliant promise, who died prematurely many years ago, after a very prosperous brief pulpit career in Cincinnati. He edited a selection of Mr. Punshon's sermons and addresses, with a warmly appreciative introduction in the course of which he spoke of Punshon and Spurgeon by way of comparison, making the following remark and prognostication, which, since then, time thus far has been busy signally falsifying:

"Foremost among the famous dissenters stands the Revs. C. H. Spurgeon and W. M. Punshon, the one a Baptist, the other a Methodist. The former has already won a world-wide distinction, and in many respects he deserves it; the

other is making his way more slowly *but even more securely.* . . . Spurgeon's fame sprouted like that of 'Pilgrim's Progress' among the common people; and like that will perhaps blossom in the upper air of cultivated minds. Punshon, on the other hand, with the favorable verdict of the literary sanhedrin already won, from the habits of the recluse and the formalism of the scholar, is working his way more deeply into popular sympathies and current thought."

Mr. Robinson certainly was not disposed to underestimate Spurgeon. The present writer had the privilege of hearing Spurgeon several times in Mr. Robinson's company, and he well remembers his companion hearer's rather indignant championship on the great preacher's behalf, in reply to a whispered hint from him of his feeling a suspicion of commonplace, at one point in the discourse to which he was listening. And then how, on the next succeeding occasion, my friend triumphed over me! Spurgeon, that morning, preached a sermon better deserving to be characterized as grand, as majestic, as a product of true genius, than any other that I ever heard or read from him. He seemed to be altogether singularly in tune for the service, and when he read a hymn before the sermon in that magical, musical voice of his, I capitulated to my friend in the remark, "That is not commonplace reading of a hymn, I admit!" Robinson's only reply was, "Humph!" so uttered as to convey, without a trace of anything like offense intended on his part or felt on my own, a whole volume in claim of transcendent merit that anybody ought to recognize in such a man and such a preacher as Spurgeon.

What is it in the quality of Spurgeon's production, differencing it from Punshon's, that makes Spurgeon's production live its remarkable posthumous life, while Punshon's is to such a degree neglected? The answer, I think, is both easy and certain. The difference lies in the respective styles of the two men. Spurgeon's style is simple and natural; Punshon's style is elaborate and artificial. Spurgeon's style is of the sort that never goes out of vogue; Punshon's style

is of the sort that a succeeding generation instinctively feels to be a little old-fashioned.

Now to say that a style is artificial is not to condemn it, but only to characterize it; nobody, I think, will deny that Punshon's style is artificial. Gibbon wrote in an artificial style, and Gibbon was a great writer. Even Macaulay's style must be pronounced artificial, altho indeed it was a style perfectly natural for Macaulay. The same thing may be said of Ruskin's style. I adduce these examples to illustrate my meaning, not of course to put Punshon in the same class with them. His limitations in point of judgment and disciplined taste, in one word, of culture, would rule him out of it. "Enstrengthening," "enlifed," are coinages of his. A single such eccentricity of diction on a writer's or a speaker's part, is enough to indicate unmistakably a place for that writer or speaker in a rank below the classic. Extreme departures like these from the norm of language are, it is true, not very frequent with Punshon, but there runs through his rhetoric a strain of expression that the delicate sense of style feels to be not of the finest, the classic, order. He seems everywhere to be obeying an imperious demand, innate in him, for rhythm, in the choice of his words, in the turn of his phrases, in the construction of his periods. If his early opportunities of education had been better, if he had formed himself upon the best models in literature, his fondness for rhythm, in itself an instinct admirable for an author, but especially for an orator, would have served him usefully and need never have led him astray.

Here is a passage of really effective, condensed and rapid rhetorical narrative and description which, considered strictly in itself, deserves nearly unqualified praise; the subject will be recognized as Disraeli (the date of the address containing the passage is 1854; Disraeli had not yet reached the summit of his power and fame):

"In the year 1837 a young member, oriental alike in his lineage and in his fancy, entered Parliament, chivalrously panting for

distinction in that intellectual arena. He was already known as a successful three-volumer, and his party was ready to hail him as a promising auxiliary. Under these auspices he rose to make his maiden speech. But he had made a grand mistake. He had forgotten that the figures of St. Stephen's are generally arithmetical, and that superfluity of words, except in certain cases, is regarded as superfluity of naughtiness. He set out with the intention to dazzle, but country gentlemen object to be dazzled save on certain conditions. They must be allowed to prepare themselves for the shock; they must have due notice beforehand, and the operation must be performed by an established parliamentary favorite. In this case all these conditions were wanting. The speaker was a *parvenu*. He took them by surprise, and he pelted them with tropes like hail. Hence he had not gone far before there were signs of impatience — by and by the ominous cry of 'Question'— then came some parliamentary extravagance, met by derisive cheers — cachinnatory symptoms began to develop themselves until at last, in the midst of an imposing sentence in which he had carried his audience to the Vatican and invested Lord John Russell with the temporary custody of the keys of St. Peter, the mirth grew fast and furious; somnolent squires woke up and joined in sympathy and the House resounded with irrepressible peals of laughter. Mortified and indignant, the orator sat down, closing with these memorable words: 'I sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me!' In the mortification of that night, we doubt not, was born a resolute working for the fulfilment of those words. It was an arduous struggle. There were titled claimants for renown among his competitors, and he had to break down the exclusivism. There was a suspicion of political adventuring at work, and broadly circulated, and he had this to overcome. Above all, he had to live down the remembrance of his failure. But there was the consciousness of power, and the fall which would have crushed the coward made the brave man braver. Warily walking and steadily toiling through the chance of years, seizing the opportunity as it came and always biding his time, he climbed upward to the distant summit. Prejudice melted like snow beneath his feet, and in 1852, fifteen short years after his apparent annihilation, he was in her Majesty's Privy Council, styling himself Right Honorable, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and leader of the British House of Commons."

That, I submit, is excellent rhetorical work. Very near to that passage, however, and after a manner introductory to it, is some rhetoric not so good: "Trial is God's *glorious alchymistry,* by which the dross is left in the crucible, the baser metals are transmuted, and the character is *riched* with the gold." I felt it necessary to say of the passage concerning Disraeli, "considered strictly in itself"; for where does it occur? Who would imagine such a place for it? It occurs in a lecture (scarcely differing from a pulpit discourse) entitled "The Prophet of Horeb, his Life and Its Lessons." Through what singular caprice of logical sense, of sense of fitness, on the speaker's part, should a "lesson" from the "life" of Disraeli find its way into a lecture on Elijah, *his* life and its lessons? Had Mr. Punshon's subject been, for instance, "Courage as a Condition of Success in Life," or "The Value of Self-confidence," or "Persistence as Assuring Attainment," then the stimulating example of Disraeli's triumph over obstacles would have been quite suitable for his use. But the subject was Elijah and the lessons of *his* life.

I have been dwelling on what is perhaps an extreme case of Punshon's indulgence of the habit he had of importing matter into his discourse that possessed only casual relevancy to his subject; but a very large proportion of the whole long lecture, from which the foregoing extract was taken, bears the same merely casual relation to his theme. The reader is haunted with the feeling that the lecturer was apprehensive of not having matter enough to fill up the proper measure of time. The lecture sets out with a passage about mountains and the great events associated with them in Scripture. (By the way, "Calvary" is mentioned as if that was a mountain, and, being such, was rendered, by the awful event of the crucifixion, a suitable climax to the passage.) Then follows a passage (hardly suggested at all) about the "exquisite adaptation" of the Bible "to every necessity of man." Thus is postponed the introduction of Elijah himself for the space of two pages and a half. When he is introduced, he is introduced to be almost immediately dismissed. With the

transitional exclamatory remark, "How often have we seen the main fact of this story realized in later times!" the lecturer goes off into a strain of moralizing about the failure of the world to recognize and value aright its seers and prophets, with allusions, varying in length, to Moses, to Galileo, to Columbus, to Harvey (reputed discoverer of the circulation of the blood), to Bunyan, to William Carey, to John Wesley. Without obvious reason then the lecturer declares that "there are symptoms of returning sanity," and finds occasion to quote (misquoting, but apparently on purpose) a stanza from Tennyson. "That," he says, "is a strong and growing world feeling which the poet embodies when he sings:

"'Believe us! noble Vere de Veres,
From yon blue heavens above us bent,
The grand old gardener and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.

"'Howe'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good—
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.'"

After a quotation from Tennyson, what an effect of anachronism it has, and how far away it makes our lecturer seem, now to come upon the following from Martin Farquhar Tupper, introduced for garnish, simply because Elijah's habit of prayer is spoken of. "You can not have forgotten," Punshon says, "how exquisitely the efficacy of prayer is presented in our second book of Proverbs:

"'Behold that fragile form of delicate transparent beauty,
Whose light blue eye and hectic cheek are lit by the bale-fires of decline;
Hath not thy heart said of her, Alas! poor child of weakness?
Thou hast erred; Goliath of Gath stood not in half her strength:

For the serried ranks of evil are routed by the lightning of her eye;
Seraphim rally at her side, and the captain of that host is God,
For that weak fluttering heart is strong in faith assured —
Dependence is her might, and behold — she prayeth,'"

The rhetorical designation of Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy" as "our second book of Proverbs," together with the admiring adverb used in quoting from it, shows Mr. Punshon's uncritical estimate of that now forgotten volume of "poetry"— which a little more than half a century ago was on every center-table.

It is no wonder that after digressions so many and adduction of examples so various, sometimes so alien from the theme announced in his title, the lecturer should recollect himself to say: "But we must not forget, as we are in some danger of doing, that we must draw our illustrations mainly from the life of Elijah"!

Punshon was always true to his calling; he did not forget to preach when he lectured. It has been therefore quite fair toward him, and faithful enough to the general character of these papers as devoted to the criticism of preachers, to dwell thus long on a lecture, instead of a sermon, of Punshon's. The digressive method to which I have called attention as pursued in a large part of the lecture, is adhered to throughout the production to its very end, as, readers will remember, it began with its very beginning. The same method prevails throughout the whole volume of Punshon's published work. There is little continuity of thought, and therefore little progress of thought; as for culmination and climax there is none. The process is a process not of evolution and growth, but of agglutination. The relation of thought to thought is not an organic relation, but a relation of juxtaposition only. Still there is thought, always wholesome and helpful, conscientiously wrought into painstaking labored expression. The speaker does not spare himself. He toils at his task with never a slack moment allowed of remission for rest. His sentences are charged in every word

with the vitality of the author. This is high praise, and this praise Punshon richly deserves.

In saying there is no climax in this oratory, I lay myself liable to be misunderstood. A striking feature of Punshon's oratoric style is the recurrence at intervals of passages intensely conceived and intensely expressed, upon which evidently the generous orator has expended all his strength with a view to the utmost possible immediate effect. The conclusion of any sermon or any lecture of his is likely to exhibit this character. But these are not true climaxes, because they are not led up to; they are rather in the nature of deliberate *tours de force*. Take the following for a fair example; it is the peroration of the lecture on Elijah:

"There is hope for the future. The world is moving on. The great and common mind of humanity has caught the charm of hallowed labor. Worthy and toil-worn laborers fall ever and anon in the march, and their fellows weep their loss; and then dashing away the tears which had blinded them, they struggle and labor on. There has been an upward spirit evoked which men will not willingly let die. Young in its love of the beautiful, young in its quenchless thirst after the true we see that buoyant presence —

"'In hand it bears, 'mid snow and ice,
The banner with the strange device
EXCELSIOR!'

The one note of high music struck from the great harp of the world's heart-strings is graven on that banner. The student breathes it at his midnight lamp; the poet groans it forth in those spasms of his soul when he can not fling his heart's beauty upon language. Fair fingers have wrought in secret at that banner. Many a child of poverty has felt its motto in his soul like the last vestige of lingering divinity. The Christian longs it when his faith, piercing the invisible, desires a better country — that is, an heavenly. Excelsior! Excelsior! Brothers, let us speed onward the youth who holds that banner. Up, up, brave spirit!

"'Climb the steep and starry road
To the Infinite's abode.'

Up, up, brave spirit! Spite of Alpine steep and frowning brow — roaring blast and crashing flood — up! Science has many a glowing secret to reveal thee. Faith has many a Tabor-pleasure to inspire. Ha! does the cloud stop thy progress? Pierce through it to the sacred morning. Fear not to approach the Divinity; it is His own longing which impels thee. Thou art speeding to thy coronation, brave spirit! Up. up, brave spirit! till as thou pantest on the crest of thy loftiest achievement God's glory shall burst upon thy face; and God's voice, blessing thee from His throne in tones of approval and of welcome, shall deliver thy guerdon. 'I have made thee a little lower than the angels, and crowned thee with glory and honor!'"

One reads such a passage as the foregoing, not naturally led up to at all in the progress of the discourse, and is almost tempted to look for *"Plaudite!"* at the end, uttered by the speaker after the manner of the ancient Roman comedians — it seems so evidently to invite a sympathetic admiring response from the audience. Such a response it no doubt obtained, if not an audible response from hand and mouth, at least a silent response in the heart of every hearer. The address was delivered before the Young Men's Christian Association in Exeter Hall. If the history of its effect could be traced, there is little question that a quickened impulse toward what is noblest and best in character and in conduct would prove to have resulted in the breast of many a young man among the hearers. Mr. Punshon himself stood there before them a shining exemplar of virtuous manhood, and, in reinforcement of influence from that eloquent fact, there was the arousing, the electric, delivery. This preacher, by the consenting testimony of all competent witnesses, was in his happiest moments master of a singularly potent elocution. And it should not fail to be acknowledged and remembered that, of true and living eloquence, elocution constitutes at least one-half — elocution, delivery, being probably what the famous "Action! action! action!" of the ancient orator meant, when he gave that word three times over as the secret of eloquence.

One gentleman of high intelligence, a warm admirer of Punshon's oratory, while sagaciously critical of it withal, spoke of him lately to me in comparison and contrast with Bishop Simpson. He had enjoyed in his younger days the privilege of hearing the great preacher during the time when the latter was achieving his useful and brilliant pulpit career in Canada. He said that whereas Bishop Simpson had genuinely "inspirational" moments, in which with overpowering bursts of spontaneous, unpremeditated eloquence he swept everything before him, all was studiously prepared in advance with Punshon. I may be permitted to raise the question, Were there not "inspirational" moments with Punshon too, affecting not indeed either the thought or the rhetoric of his discourse (which had been elaborated to the last detail in the closet of the orator), but the elocution with which certain passages would be delivered?

Sixteen years after the date of the lecture on Elijah, Punshon, in the mellow maturity of his powers, preached in Toronto, Ontario, to candidates for the Christian ministry a sermon which he entitled "The Ministerial Commission." This sermon is well worth reading for its reflection of the preacher's own noble ministerial character. It presents a pure and high ideal of the Christian minister's mission in the world. It could not but have had a penetrative tonic effect on the young men to whom it was especially addressed in Toronto. It is perhaps as good a specimen production for study of Punshon's method and style, and of his elevated spiritual quality, at its ripest and best, as would be found in any single one of his extant discourses.

On the whole, William Morley Punshon, alike as man, as Christian, and as preacher, is a tradition to be cherished, by eminence among Methodists, but also throughout all the divisions, of whatever name, of the church universal. He served well his own generation by the will of God, and he bequeathed a precious heritage of blameless memory to the generations following.

XVIII

EZEKIEL GILMAN ROBINSON

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In the paper now to follow, the reader will be sure to feel a certain difference of tone in treatment of its subject, discriminating it from all its companions in the present series of criticisms. This particular criticism, while it does not, as it should not, avoid criticising, partakes, more than do the other criticisms, of the character of a personal tribute. Such a change in tone was, as it were, inevitable; for in this case the critic was a pupil dealing with a teacher. A kind of junior loyalty, bordering on filial reverence, would here, he thought, be pardonable in the critic, nay, would almost be imposed upon him as an obligation, by the inherent fitness of things.

EZEKIEL GILMAN ROBINSON

THE subject of this brief paper was in every respect — physically, mentally, morally — a striking personality. One comes to associate so inseparably the physical aspect and impression of a man with that man's peculiar type of mental and moral character, that it is perhaps not often safe, in any given case, to say that there was from the beginning an inherent, an inevitable, "preestablished harmony" between the one and the other. But certainly if to say so be, in any case whatsoever, safe, then it would seem to be safe in the case of Dr. Robinson.

His tall form, not always erect, but always capable of erecting itself, and upon fit oratoric occasion frequently doing so with commanding effect; his habitual carriage, naturally dignified and gentleman-like, but of a character betokening it that of a person who scorned to be finical, and who might surprise you with a sudden manly breach of the conventional; his gait, the stalwart stride of a man intent on getting forward, while in will, as in locomotive equipment, amply able to get forward, and that with speed too such as would put you upon your mettle to keep up with him; his voice, a mint of the clearest-cut, freshest-stamped utterance, given forth in tones keen, incisive, insistent, penetrative, tones fond of the high key natural to a mind consciously pressing to a point perfectly well perceived ahead, but ready at times to bottom out into a solid, hearty, rich, vibrant, pectoral quality — all these outward traits in Dr. Robinson you felt to be but the reflex of the manner of man that he inwardly and essentially was.

Have I seemed to describe a man in whom the challenging, the aggressive, the belligerent, spirit predominated? Well, complaisance was undoubtedly *not* the chief note of Dr. Rob-

inson's character. Still, there was fineness in him, as well as strength. His heart was tender and true when you got to it, altho he was indeed far from wearing it on his sleeve. And running all through his intellectual constitution was a vein of the genuinely imaginative and poetical. I can testify to the fact that when, in his fresh manly prime, he first came from pastorship in Cincinnati to Rochester as teacher of theology, and there immediately began to make himself felt as a preacher of extraordinary power and brilliancy, one of the traits in him that gained him the adhesion and admiration of the most cultivated and the choicest among the students, both of the seminary and of the college, was the openness, the hospitality, that he displayed to the influence of the poets — this, with the occasional gleam, as of original poetry, that lighted up his eloquence.

It seems to me now, as I recall the cycle of discourses which Dr. Robinson delivered on the then current phases of religious skepticism, during the autumn and winter of the first year of his memorable work in Rochester, that he never afterward surpassed the triumphs of that period of his pulpit achievement. I know of a circle of young men — friends they were in perpetual council as to things of the spirit — among the Rochester students, who used as often as possible to meet after each one of the evening discourses now alluded to, and discuss it in a prolonged symposium of mutually exciting and excited admiration and delight. The present writer, then a college freshman, but admitted by special privilege to quasi-equal fraternal relationship of intellect with certain choice spirits of the theologues, was one of this, alas, now long since unsoldered roundtable. He taught a district school fifteen miles away from the city, during a part of the time covered by the delivery of those memorable discourses. This prevented his hearing the whole series.

There was one signal occasion, however, which he, though so far away, felt that he could not miss. After preaching himself twice, that Sunday, sermons prepared under pressure of a sudden call, in the midst of a week filled to the brim

with six days' teaching (six hours each day), he walked those fifteen miles to Rochester, that he might hear Dr. Robinson on Theodore Parker. (This lover of pulpit eloquence had in addition previously walked two miles out and two miles back between house and church to do his own preaching.) I mention this incident to illustrate the enthusiasm aroused by Dr. Robinson's pulpit eloquence of that time. The particular demonstration described was no doubt a specimen of individual youthful extravagance; but it was such extravagance as was little likely to have occurred without a surrounding atmosphere of contagious enthusiasm to encourage and support it.

The discourses thus recalled were, like Dr. Robinson's discourses in general from the beginning to the end of his conspicuous career, delivered *ex tempore*. And now I must say something which, save to the most thoughtful, will seem like derogation from the praise that I bestow; to some it will seem, on the contrary, enhancement, rather than diminution, of eulogy. Brilliant, then, as those discourses were, and powerful, they yet fell something short of that decisively triumphant effect in oratory of which the speaker seemed all the time tantalizingly capable. This was, I think, the case with Dr. Robinson's public discourse generally. There was a certain lack of *abandon*, a certain self-checking refusal on the part of the preacher to trust himself wholly to the sweep of the inspiration that was perpetually swelling within him almost, but not *quite*, to the volume and the head that would burst every barrier and pour forth eloquence in an irresistible torrent, in an overwhelming flood.

I account for this just missing, on Dr. Robinson's part, of the supreme achievement in oratory, chiefly by two considerations: one pertaining to the personal constitution of the man, and the other incidental to the occupation of his life. Dr. Robinson was primarily a teacher, and but secondarily a preacher. His habit in utterance was formed and was controlled by the practice of the classroom rather than by the practice of the pulpit. He thought in brief, rapid " swallow-

flights" of the mind, rather than in long, continuous, sustained voyages to a goal far-off, but clearly perceived and definitely aimed at.

He seemed to challenge and invite interpellation from his hearers. This he often secured in the classroom; and then it was that he appeared in the full glory and power of his extemporary eloquence. He perhaps needed such perfectly sensible and unmistakable reaction on the part of his audience, to bring him out in the plenitude of his incredibly swift and ready play of intellect and of imagination.

"To that, three things may be replied," was almost a formula with him, when a student would state an objection to some point made by the teacher. "In the first place," and Dr. Robinson would launch himself full speed at once in reply, with lightning-like celerity and infallible precision of aim. The effect was incalculably enhanced by an unsurpassed, unsurpassable, clearness, accuracy, emphasis, momentum, of articulation and utterance, sufficient in themselves to have produced a complete illusion of the intellectual quality corresponding, even had that quality been, as it was not, wanting. The chances were even that the second and third of the "three things" would not be reached. To me, as pupil, it was often in some respectful doubt whether the "three things" were as clearly present to my teacher's mind, at the moment of his venturing to assert their existence, as in his own confident conviction they were at least potentially available, and safe, at need, to be depended upon for yielding themselves up to the quest of that imperious and importunate intellect of his. In truth, and tho it be a thing paradoxical to say, Dr. Robinson's habitual manner of challenge and self-confidence appeared to me the unconscious self-rallying expedient of a nature sincerely modest, even timid, much more than that outward expression of a brusque, domineering, overbearing, brow-beating spirit in the man, which by the casual observer it might easily be mistaken to be.

This leads naturally to the stating of the second one of

the two considerations which to me chiefly account for Dr. Robinson's not being in fact quite the supremely triumphant orator that he seemed in almost all respects so capable of being. Notwithstanding his high, half-haughty, half-scornful, outward air of audacious self-assertion, Dr. Robinson was at bottom too modestly doubtful of himself, or, if you please, he had too much wise disdain of pretending to be, where he knew he was not, altogether sure of his ground; in a word, he was too much a thinker, pure and simple, with the thinker's circumspect speculation and misgiving, to be the bold mere *voice* that the popular orator has need to be.

It is hardly a third consideration, tho it admits of being named as such, the fact that Dr. Robinson's equipment was too predominantly of the intellect, rather than of the heart, to constitute him the ideal orator. "Rather than of the heart," I say. But it is of what I may call public, not private, heart that I speak. Toward his friends, and especially toward his kindred, the people of his home, Dr. Robinson, I should do him wrong not also to say, had a capacity of the most exquisite, the most costly, affection. Yet it remains true that, altho for personal friendship and for the intimacies of the hearth, thus choicely and richly endowed, he was comparatively wanting in that broad, that genial, that common, quality of temperament which seems often to inscribe the elect popular favorite's heart, *Pro bono publico,* and offer it freely for daws to peck at. But this very characteristic in Dr. Robinson helped make him, helped keep him, the teacher, in his kind not easily equaled among his coevals, that he was universally acknowledged to be.

Apart from the orator and the educator that he was, Dr. Robinson was potentially a literary man of a very high order. I have just now been re-reading the inaugural address delivered by him on the occasion of his being inducted into his office as professor of theology at Rochester in 1853. Dr. Maginnis, a clear and venerable name in Baptist educational history, had, not long before, died while occupying the place in which Dr. Robinson now stood as his successor.

Here are the sentences with which the inaugural address begins. Will any qualified critic of literature undertake to name a single point at which, for brevity, simplicity, sincerity, measure, fitness — and to this list of traits desirable in style, I might almost, as to turn of expression, add two traits more, felicity and grace — will, I ask, any good critic find a point at which these sentences are wanting? The buried Wordsworthian quotation and allusion in them takes on a value not less really poetical, and distinctly *more* substantial, than that belonging to the lines of the original:

"The service that has brought us here this evening cannot but turn the first thoughts of most of us to one who a twelvemonth ago was in life and among us, but who to-night sleeps with the dead. And, surely, it is fitting, that in passing to the evening's reflections, we take his resting place in our way. The thoughts that are to engage us will take a sober coloring from eyes that have but glanced at the tomb, especially the tomb that conceals from us so much of intellect and piety. It might be profitable even to linger here in our meditations; it would strengthen our courage to look steadily at the example of one, who, while compelled, his life long, to defend himself against the attacks of disease with the one hand, could yet with the other accomplish so much for the Master.

"But he needs no memorial at our hands; and, least of all, in this place, where genius and sanctified friendship have already presented one inimitable in its beauty and eloquence. [The allusion is, I believe, to a discourse pronounced by Dr. William R. Williams, but modestly withheld by him from print.] Indeed, he had engraved a memorial for himself on the spirits of his pupils. He had erected to himself a monument in every mind that had felt the power of his influence. The monuments of his worth and witnesses of his toils are here, and are scattered throughout our land. His works will be still praising him.

"But to stand in his vacant place, and take up his work where he left it, is certainly no idle undertaking. You know how sad and solemn is the task laid on him who is made to lift, with untried hand, the staff that dropped from the hand of such experience. Your sympathies and prayers, I am confident, may be relied on for the future; for the present, your kindly attention

is bespoken, while a delineation is attempted of the need and the advantages, in our day, of what, for the want of a better phraseology, may be denominated Experimental Theology."

Something like the same awe, as in the presence of the noble dead, that inspired the foregoing exordium, usurps now the present writer's mind in concluding what he must acknowledge to be rather a very inadequate tribute to the memory of Dr. Robinson than an exhaustive criticism of his pulpit eloquence. If former students of his suffer themselves ever to recall that the teacher whom they so much admire sometimes indulged, to a degree beyond what was wisest and best, in a certain disdain as toward fellows of his, perhaps less gifted, or even less elevated in character, than he was himself, then those students will be irresistibly reminded likewise that as toward ONE personage at least, that lofty, that imperial, spirit always uncovered himself with a reverence and an awe that was as unreserved and as absolute as it was unquestionably sincere. There is no image of my revered teacher in theology dearer to memory with me, none spiritually more helpful, than the image of that noble head, silver in advance of its time, declined in reverence before the invisible Christ, while the repressed manly voice vibrated out its rich, sweet tones in prayer, amid the gathering glooms of the twilight-tide, at the close of the daily two-hour session of the classes, in the little upper room where we met in the seminary at Rochester.

Whatever else fail from my mind of the memory of Dr. Robinson, let that august, that pathetic, image of him, adoring, abide!

The sonnets following, all of them, relate respectively to the subjects of the preceding criticisms. They are here given anonymously, in an order of arrangement not at all corresponding with that in which the criticisms appear. This accordingly will be found no guide in assigning the sonnets severally to their proper subjects. The criticisms themselves will, it is believed, to the careful reader of them, prove sufficient means for determining the true distribution. In a volume of collected "Poems" by the present author, recently issued, a number of these sonnets appear with the names of their subjects frankly printed.

XIX

I

Behold him standing there, erect and tall,
Watched by those thousands of fixed, eager eyes.
Hear him. That voice! What matter of surprise
The heartsome accents hold his hearers all
Rapt and suspended in delightful thrall?
So frank, free, generous, cordial in his guise,
He seems to hail you comrade, comrade-wise,
And for response of comrade from you call.

The happy genius to be grateful his,
And an engaging fondness for profuse
Profession of indebtedness it is,
That in such presence laps you in sweet truce
To other than all noble thought and high,
And one large love to all beneath the sky.

II

Cold as the cold white icefields of the pole,
But as the northern dawn above them, bright —
Kindling the crystal spaces of the night —
He boltless, heatless lightnings of the soul,
From lips untouched with any living coal
By seraph off the altar brought alight,
Launched, in a splendor feasting full the sight,
But to the heart a blank, unwritten scroll.

Lone, insulated by his quality —
A priest, a Jesuit, and a celibate —
Among his fellows sundered from them, he
Vainly, by such a difference separate,
Essayed, with all that brilliancy of speech,
His hearers in their true, deep self to reach.

III

Pulpit extravaganzist uncontrolled,
As heady as a wild ass racing free
And snuffing up the wind! So, scorning he
Pathway by other footsteps beaten, bold,
To trackless regions, over mountains old,
He hied him where his flying feet would flee
All following, since no mortal eye could see
They did to any clear direction hold!

But there at least he thundered on in tread
As masterful as wayward, and no less
Unweariable. And, strange thing to be said,
That wild-ass ranger of the wilderness
From each excursion brought some gospel bread
Wherewith the gaping, hungering soul to bless!

IV

He seemed sometimes a spiritual Prospero
Cunning to conjure tempest, and control —
Invisible tempest in the secret soul,
Awful and silent, deep clouds hanging low
Full charged with thunder threatening future woe
Unspeakable, and everduring dole,
To whomso they should break upon and roll
Their burden — found to God a final foe.

Nay, not as master of some magic spell
Worked he those wonders in the realm of mind;
Rather it was but by believing well,
And to obedience biding still inclined,
That, as once Aaron with his wielded rod,
This potent man became the power of God.

V

He might have been a ruler of the earth;
With his ascendent gifts in many a kind,
Gifts of the body, nobler of the mind,
He was a sovereign by the right of birth.
Rich in his dower of simple human worth,
Wisdom he added, will, sure tact to find,
By the deep guess of sympathy divined,
Way to men's hearts through pathos or through mirth.

Clear like a silver trumpet rang his voice,
Soft like a lute, and like an organ strong;
Its music made the multitudes rejoice,
Charming the ear with eloquence like song.
Men would have crowned him; other was his choice —
Crowning from Him to whom all crowns belong!

VI

Such light, such heat, such life, such cheer, such
power,
Effulgent far, like virtue from the sun,
In flood on flood all bounds to overrun
And, unexhausted still from hour to hour,
Pour everywhere profuse its affluent dower,
Lavishing largess free on every one,
Wealthy or poor or happy or undone,
Welcomed to sit beneath the golden shower!

This, yesterday; today, a different world;
A living splendor in its fountain quenched,
A great light-giver from its station hurled,
Sudden, as had the midday sun been wrenched
Out of his orbit, or his beams been furled,
And the whole earth in other climate drenched!

VII

Already half, by his commanding height,
Sufficient, nay, superfluous and to spare,
Whence fully to erect it little care —
Beetling oft toward you overshadowed quite,
Like some deep-sunk cliff-overshadowed bight —
Already thus he, tall and imminent, and an air
As if of haughty challenge unaware,
Had, ere he spoke, asserted, half, his might.

But when he spoke — that tense, incisive voice,
In pure strong tones through all its compass ranging,
Articulation exquisitely choice,
However to precipitate movement changing,
Imagination, the word-wingéd thought! —
Still greater he than the great things he wrought.

VIII

A PURE, if but a transitory, flame,
Bright while he lived, tho doomed with him to die,
He like a meteor flashed across the sky
Drawing a trail as of enduring fame,
Fed from the very substance of his frame
Which he burned freely in ambition high
With whatsoever starry light to vie,
In everlasting constancy the same.

It was not so to be; yet not the less
Otherwise he an arduous end achieved;
There is succeeding, that is not success
In compassing the purpose you conceived.
Aspiring and endeavoring so, he wrought
Nobly, and by but his example taught.

IX

If the sun blazing in a cloudless sky
  At midnoon, in the fulness of his power
  And glory, should, at his meridian tower,
Be smitten and sent ruining from on high,
In dark thenceforth forever lost to lie:
  Or, if that same sun, holding still his dower
  Of steadfastness in station, hour by hour
Should suffer alteration to the eye,
  Malignant alteration! from his bright
Appearance and intensity of pure
  To aspect sinister, from whence no light
But only darkness visible; assure
  Me, for, myself, I am not sure, which sight
Would of *his* fame and fate be symbol truer!

X

Oh, well-beloved voice! Never to be
Heard in our councils! Hence forever flown!
No more that haunting pathos in the tone
To witch us with its wistful melody!

Nay, but the voice it was not. It was he,
Himself, the man, the Christian, therein shown:
The regal pride not driven from its throne,
But chastened to a high humility;
The opulent sweet worldly wisdom, blent
With such clear innocence of worldly guile;
Learning, to service of his fellows lent;
The gift of sympathy in tear or smile;
The upward vision on the heavens intent —
These were what won us with resistless wile.

XI

He was a gracious figure, dear to men
By merit, but by fortune yet more dear.
Pausing a moment once in mid-career
He told the story of his life. Now when
Men saw he did this gracefully, and then
His fair fame from aspersion foul to clear,
They read him with magnanimous cheer on cheer,
Gave him their hearts, since he gave them his — pen!

It grew at length the vogue to praise his style:
The praise was partly generous tribute paid
To one nigh alien in his native isle;
Partly it was mere complaisance men laid
At one's feet whom in true effect the while
They flouted — by not heeding what he said!

XII

A MISPLACED schoolman of the Middle Age,
Out of due time by misadventure born
And on our generation cast, forlorn
Of fellowships his proper heritage —
Congenial comrades of the mind to wage
His equal combats with of lore, in scorn
Of mean advantage, radiant like the morn
Each combatant with ardor for the gage!

By the Time-spirit cowed, not he! That front
He faced instead, and gave it frown for frown,
The bullying brag and swagger it was wont
To see the rest incontinent go down
Before, he laughed to scorn. In battle-brunt
For the ascended Christ he won his crown!

XIII

How is the strong staff broken, and the rod
Beautiful long before so many eyes!
We, with habitual comfort, saw it rise,
Like a tall palm high regnant o'er the sod
Where to the breeze its fronded branches nod,
The stateliest thing beneath the sunny skies,
Yet bountiful as stately, its great prize
Of fruitage yielding yearly, blest of God!

Such yesterday was he; but prostrate now
He stretches that imperial stature fair,
The shapely column, the fruit-bearing bough,
Ruined along the ground, and, look ye, where
He stood late, lifting up his kingly brow,
Void — and a desolation in the air!

XIV

A MASSIVE mind, informed at last with grace
Through culture, culture sedulous and long,
And through high choice, outside the common throng,
Of the selected spirits of the race
Sought widely in whatever time or place
For his companionship, the wise and strong,
The lords of eloquence, the lords of song.
These taught him a fine scorn of what was base,
Nay, even of what was less good than the best,
In art and aspiration. More, they spurred
Him by example till he had no rest;
The trophies of Miltiades would gird
At him caught shrinking from the supreme test —
Thus he won hard his mastery with the Word.

XV

An honest man, foursquare to all mankind;
A simple man, with no ulterior aim
To serve that if exposed had brought him shame;
Yet circumspect, to far forecast inclined,
Who would not make a judgment rash and blind,
But, having made it, whether praise or blame
Followed, would hold it stanchly still the same,
However suffering in his secret mind.

A stalwart man in stature and in size,
He stood before assemblies armed with all
The force to wield them that in virtue lies.
A preacher of the gospel such as Paul
Preached it, he wished from men no other prize
Than that they form *that* image of John Hall!

XVI

New England of New England was the stock;
The root was suckled in New England soil;
New England sweat of brow from honest toil
Watered the springing shoot, and many a shock
Of hardship shook it faster to the rock;
On books to pore he burned no midnight oil,
The ages had not heaped for him their spoil;
But his tough strength at weariness could mock.

Out of New England into the wide world,
Strong by the east for broadening by the west,
Flung where most mad the eddying currents swirled!
God said, "Let be; will he abide the test?"
That a man may, through faith, wherever hurled,
Go conquering, God once more made manifest!

XVII

A SQUARE-TOED Scotchman, firm upon his base
As if his feet were clamped there, to abide
Whatever storm to shift them might betide,
John Knox's resolution on his face!
He could at need have smitten with the mace,
Could power's browbeating menace have defied,
Confronting pride with overtopping pride;
But he loved more to magnify the grace
Of God our Father in the gospel shown —
To him, one gospel, whether in the old,
Or in the sweet new, testament made known.
From these two mines he dug out ribs of gold,
And wrought them into ingots of his own,
Huge cubic shapes that spoke the master's mold!

XVIII

A GOODLY tree fast by a river brink —
A full-fed river with its waters rolled
An equal volume out of mountains old —
Fruit-bearing, like those Pharphar gives to drink
His current which the summers never shrink,
Libation poured from Lebanon snow-cold;
Its branches all thick-hung with fruit of gold,
Refreshment, should the vital spirits sink —
Such he, deep-rooted on the pleasant shore
Whereby the pure perennial river flows
Of God's word issuing fresh forevermore
From the eternal throne, as in repose
(So shall be said hereafter), life-long bore
That fruit which only from that watering grows!

XX

JESUS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

It is curious, and, to one inclined to be psychological in his habit of thought, rather interesting, to consider in what a degree, subtly and insensibly, the particular publishing conditions under which a writer writes will inevitably affect and qualify his production. The following paper — in that respect differing from all the other papers of full length composing this volume — was not written for the "Homiletic Review." The "Biblical World," one of the group of University of Chicago periodical publications, had planned to have a leading number devoted to the presenting of Jesus Christ in various aspects of his person and character, and, in the fulfilment of that idea, the President, who is remarkably present and active in every department of the complex University life, asked me to contribute a paper on Jesus Christ as preacher. The paper now to follow was the response rendered to that editorial request. I feel in revising the text (adding to it here and there — perhaps in one or two instances, things that would not have seemed quite appropriate in the paper as originally published) that the production was indefinably influenced by the atmosphere in which it was written and by the manner of publication to which it was destined. I need not say, however, that neither the controlling spirit of it, nor at any point the substance, was untrue then, as neither is untrue now, to the writer's most intimate personal conviction.

JESUS

Two questions may at once fairly be raised by the reader. First, was Jesus a preacher? Secondly, if he was, can he properly be called a preacher of to-day? We answer these two questions in their order.

First, then, was Jesus a preacher? Was he not rather a teacher? Well, preacher in the sense of "sermonizer," Jesus certainly was not. Ought anybody to be? But to answer that question would lead us too far afield. Enough for our present purpose to note that Jesus was not in the somewhat technical, professional sense of that not very felicitous term, a "sermonizer." Rather than that, he was indeed a teacher.

But if we carry up the idea of the teacher's function — regarded as that of one who addresses the mind simply, imparting information, applying stimulus, widening the view, deepening and strengthening the foundations of knowledge possessed — if, I say, we carry up this idea to the further idea of finally influencing the will and conforming conduct, outward and inward, of making and molding character and destiny, why, then, we do not indeed destroy the teacher, but the teacher becomes in our conception something more than teacher, and we may well enough call him preacher. Preacher in this sense of the word, Jesus by eminence was. The ultimate effect on will in his disciples, was always to him more, immeasurably more, than any effect on their understanding. This latter effect was invariably for the sake of that former, for the sake, namely, of the effect on their will as guide to their affections and to their behavior. That such is in truth the fact, is sufficiently indicated in the prevailingly preceptive, imperative, tone and form of the teaching of Jesus. In one important

sense therefore, Jesus was even more a preacher than a teacher.

But, secondly, can Jesus properly be ranked as a preacher of to-day? The present writer well knows, he has again and again been led keenly to feel, how temporary and transient the vogue and influence of any preacher has always seemed necessarily to be. There are few forms of intellectual product more ephemeral than the sermon. Scarcely does the editorial article of the daily press surpass it in fugacity. But the sermons, or rather to conform our expression more exactly to the fact, the preachings, of Jesus are an exception. They are sempiternal in quality. They are recent, and as it were contemporaneous, in every age. In a very important sense, therefore, Jesus is a preacher of to-day — as he was of yesterday, as he will be of to-morrow. A preacher of yesterday, to-day, and forever, he comes well within the proper scope of this book.

Let us keep in mind the true restricted purpose of the present study. It is not to consider Jesus Christ generally in his person and his character, but simply to point out the chief traits which characterized him as preacher or teacher.

Some of those characteristic traits belong uniquely to him. Let us begin with one such. Jesus taught with *authority*. Nothing in his preaching is a trait more marked, more pervasive, more indelibly waterlined into the texture of his discourse, than this. It is, perhaps, the one note in which Jesus, as teacher, is different from all other teachers in the world, before him or after him. Other teachers have, indeed, assumed or affected the tone of authority in their teaching. With some such teachers the assumption has the effect, was designed to have the effect, of only a pleasant complacency on their part; perhaps even of a certain complaisance toward their disciples or readers. Ralph Waldo Emerson is an instance. In form, he is not seldom as authoritative as was Jesus. But no one feels that he is so in spirit and intent. On the contrary, he associates his readers with himself and makes them share with their mas-

ter a kind of illusory sense of possessing final and oracular wisdom. Neither writer nor reader is deceived in the premises. The air of seer with which such a man speaks is frankly put on. It is a manner, no more.

Not so with the authoritative tone in Jesus. That is no manner merely. It is of himself. It is the natural language of the speaker. Instead of being put on, it is such that it could not even be conceived as put off. Buffon's word is completely realized. In the case of Jesus, the style is he. But we do not have to *infer* what, if it were left to be inferred, is so abundantly implied. Jesus himself, in express terms, insists on his own authority as teacher. He said to his disciples, "Ye call me master [teacher] and lord and ye say well, for so I am." Again, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" It was no mere superficial complaisance that this teacher would accept from his disciples, in being addressed by them with a conventional title of deference and respect. He claimed seriously all that his title of lord implied.

Intimately related to the trait just named in Jesus as preacher, indeed almost identical with that, yet of a nature to invite separate mention, is a quality for which our language does not, in any single word, afford an adequate name. We shall have to throw out tentatives, make approximations, in order to express it. We might say that Jesus spoke like a seer, like a prophet, like an oracle. But that would very imperfectly, indeed it would somewhat misleadingly, express the fact. It would, to be sure, set Jesus apart from the order of those whom by way of distinction and honor we call "thinkers." So far, it would be just and good. For Jesus was conspicuously, remarkably, *not* a thinker among thinkers. He is nowhere, in the records that we have of him, exhibited to us as going through any of those intellectual processes by which men in general arrive at their results in conviction, true or false. He was not a *seeker* of truth. So far as appears he did not reason, institute inductions, draw inferences. He saw without effort. He

did not explore and discover. He saw and announced. He sometimes argued; but this to convince, or rather to convict, his opponents; never to satisfy himself. In the respects thus indicated, Jesus was a seer instead of a thinker. But he was not a seer in the sense of being filled from without with an inspiration to which he served simply as organ of utterance. He was never as one carried out of himself. He spoke indeed from God, but it was in the character of a person at the same time consciously one with God. Let us say that Jesus spoke with *authority,* because he spoke as one that *knew.*

A third note, then, braided inseparably into the tone with which Jesus spoke, was the note of absolute, unshaken, unshakable *certainty.* There is in his utterances no doubt, no faltering, no wavering, no slightest possibility admitted, however remotely, of the speaker's being mistaken. What he teaches has in it the solidity — I was going to say, of the planet itself. But that were a feeble figure of speech. God himself could not be imagined speaking in human words with a more pungent and powerful effect produced of the speaker's *knowing* what he affirmed. The degree of the peculiar effect thus described is such in the case of Jesus that that alone would justify and explain the awestricken exclamation of one of his hearers, "Never man spake like this man." Christ's characteristic formula of preface, "Verily, verily," was but a kind of spontaneous, inevitable notice and sign given to hearers, of the ultimate, the absolute, character of certainty inhering in that which was to follow from his lips. How convincing, nay, how overaweing, it is, when, for instance, in opposition to traditional doctors of universally accepted authority, Jesus says, "But I say unto you"!

Something indeed of the same effect as that here dwelt upon, is felt, and felt in a degree not equaled elsewhere *except* with Christ, when we read the words of the Old Testament prophets, or the words of the apostles of Christ. But the difference is as noteworthy as the resemblance,

between these men and Jesus. The apostles speak in their Master's name; he speaks in his own name. Their commission is from him; his commission is from the Father. They are ambassadors of the King; he is the King's own and only Son. They speak that which they have been told; he speaks that which he has seen. "I speak the things which I have seen with my Father," Jesus told the contradicting Jews.

It needs to be said that the traits thus attributed to Jesus as teacher or preacher, traits naturally seeming to involve underived and independent quality in their subject, are strangely, almost paradoxically, reconciled in him with an accompanying trait of subordination and obedience. As a New Testament writer expresses it, "Tho he was a Son, yet learned he obedience." The case is one without parallel in respect of this blending and reconcilement of two seeming contraries, supremacy and subjection. The mystery of Christ's person as very God and very man, is involved.

Something like the same mystery and paradox seems also to subsist in the double attitude that Jesus held toward the Old Testament Scriptures. On the one side he treated them with the utmost reverence. He said, or implied, that their sentence on any point which they touched, was final and irreversible. "For verily I say unto you,"—such is his august and awe-inspiring language—"Till heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Nothing could go beyond this in the way of declaring the absolute truth and authority of Old Testament Scripture. And illustration of the same tenor is inwrought everywhere into the fabric of Christ's habitual discourse.

It is, however, to be noted that this accent of reverence on Christ's part for the Old Testament Scriptures, very singularly involves also a tacit assumption on his part of authority belonging to himself, coequal with their own, nay, even transcending that. The language used by Jesus, as, for instance, in the foregoing quotation from his great dis-

course, is peculiar: "Verily I say unto you." Such expression is that of one affixing a sanction. It is not that of one subscribing a loyal personal adhesion and obedience. It is rather that of one calmly assuming to endorse and to ratify. The New Testament student is not surprised, therefore, to find Jesus saying, with unaffected majesty, of his own words what he had before said of the words of the law: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

It is not to be understood as condemnation from him of what the Old Testament taught, when, in the exercise of his right, Jesus fills out, modifies, or even sets aside, a point of Old Testament teaching. If to say this be paradox, it is no less the truth. The Old Testament had foretold that a Prophet should appear, the antitype of Moses; and Moses himself is represented as bespeaking for that Prophet beforehand obedient heed; "Him shall ye hear," is the bidding. It is as if the Old Testament itself provided for its own amendment. Its letter and its spirit were actually therefore in process of being fulfilled, when its predicted Prophet took upon himself the prerogative of setting it at any point aside; that is, of replacing a provisional arrangement in it with something final and absolute; in Scripture phrase, of removing the things which were shaken, that the things which could not be shaken might remain. The annulment by Jesus of the too lax Mosaic permission of divorce is an instance in point; tho this ostensible annulment was, it is true, rather only a carrying out to further strictness, of a limitation not stringent enough, provisionally appointed by the primitive legislator. It was completion, not abrogation. The freedom with which Jesus handled the Old Testament Scriptures is thus as marked as is his reverence for them. But his freedom in handling them is no derogation from their provisional authority. It is no proof that their just claim was less, while it lasted; but only that *his* just claim was more, who could at points authoritatively define and limit the term of its lasting.

There is one thing further to be remarked on the attitude held by Jesus as public teacher toward the Old Testament Scriptures. Whatever may have been his knowledge in the case, and however different may have been his own individual views on the various points involved, Jesus never disturbed the current popular belief concerning the origin, the date, the authorship, of the various books that in his day composed, as these same books compose in our day, the Old Testament canon. If contemporary belief was mistaken on these points, or on any of them, and if Jesus knew that it was mistaken, he yet did nothing to unsettle it, or to correct it. He left it absolutely as he found it, unchanged, unchallenged.

Such is the fact, the incontestable fact. What does this fact prove? That the contemporary popular belief was right? Hardly. I thus reply, altho my own individual opinion is — an opinion long held by me on grounds of literary criticism alone, and lately confirmed by what seem to be the unquestionable results of archeologic research — that the traditional view on the subject of Old Testament origins and authorships, which view I understand to be substantially the same as that current among the Jews of Christ's time, probably comes much nearer the truth in the case, than any alternative conclusion likely ever to be arrived at and agreed upon by modern higher critics of the ancient sacred canon. Still, Jesus did not, so far as I have been able to see, commit himself, directly or indirectly, on the points involved; and we are left free to infer only that he thought it not worth while to disturb the current belief, even if the current belief were wrong. So Jesus bore himself toward this matter then. Would he so bear himself toward the same matter now? Or, to put our question otherwise, Would Jesus still have observed reticence on this topic, if the topic had been in his day a "burning" one?

One capital instance given us of his method in handling what was a burning topic in his day, may yield us some light on this interesting point. I refer to the question of

the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cæsar. Jesus would not discuss this question; but he decided it. His generalized decision in the case is capable of manifold individual applications: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." Jesus would not be diverted from his purpose, which was single and unworldly. He was intent on proclaiming and establishing the kingdom of God in the earth. It would be forgetfulness of his aim, if he allowed himself to be entangled in the affairs and disputes of this world. He freed himself, in the shortest possible time, from temporary considerations of every sort that would hinder and embarrass him in the one work that he came to do.

The whole tone and tenor of his teaching and his life tend in a single direction, and that direction is to make it probable that Jesus would have put out of his way at once, as things not important enough to engage *his* attention, all questions, though never so burning at the moment, of how, when, by whom, the Old Testament Scriptures were produced. The one thing vital about these Scriptures was that they were from God and were to be reverenced accordingly.

Does it then follow that men must never inquire and explore as to the genesis and history of the human element in the authorship of the sacred Scriptures? Who would affirm this? But of Christ's purpose in the world, such speculation constituted no part. He came not to gratify intellectual curiosity, but to excite and to satisfy spiritual cravings; in short, to save men. Let those addicted to scientific pursuits make, if they so pleased, scientific quest in the region of Old Testament origins. That, however, was not his own mission; nor was it to be the mission of those whom he would send forth to preach his gospel. Give to science its due, and give to religion its due; render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's.

If this hypothetical conclusion as to the attitude of Jesus toward questions of higher biblical criticism, be sound, then

the way is now absolutely open to Science, free from any interdict to be drawn from the example or authority of Christ, to seek and to find what results she justly may, about Old Testament and New Testament origins. Such researches, the present writer fully believes, Science may legitimately make, quite without abridgement of privilege proceeding from any quarter. But, if we have rightly inferred from the spirit and example of Jesus, the *religious* teacher, teaching in his name, will not do this. It is a scientific, not a religious aim. The results, whatever they may be worth as science, will have no religious value. I mean, of course, so far as they are speculative and uncertain. Where the results are matters of really verified knowledge, they may undoubtedly sometimes be used to advantage in throwing illustrative light on particular passages, perhaps whole tracts, of Scripture, and so subserve a vital religious purpose. Beyond this, the preacher of the gospel has no warrant from the example of his Master in going. It is a pronounced negative trait in Christ's teaching that he strongly refrained from intermeddling in the burning questions of his time, unless they were religious, and vitally religious, questions. "My kingdom is not of this world," he seemed always to remember. "Who made me a ruler and divider over you?" — this interrogative refusal on his part of intervention in the matter of a disputed inheritance, expressed also his attitude toward public questions of the day on which good men might honestly differ in opinion. Even a question like that of the difference between Samaritan and Jew, though it involved a vital point of religion, he pronounced his sentence upon, frankly indeed, yet with a certain approach to impatience, with an air of dismissal — because the controversy about it was of only a subordinate and temporary importance. The example and influence of Jesus as preacher are wholly in favor of exclusive devotion on the part of his ministers to what is religious, as distinguished from what is intellectual, in interest — this, even where that which is intellectual in interest may border closely on religion. It

is not meant thus to be implied that some men may not, in a vitally and a soundly religious spirit, and with a sincerely religious motive in doing so, devote themselves to scientific exploration of the questions involved in the so-called higher criticism of Scripture. Assuredly, men having a conscientious sense of such vocation may freely do this, animated with the hope of discovering what shall serve the cause of religion in the world. But the work thus described is not included either among the specific activities commanded by Jesus to his *ministers,* or among those recommended to them by their Master's example. "Preach the word"— the word, not higher criticism of the word, is still, as it always was, and always will be, the prime injunction to ministers of the gospel.

In the matter and substance of his preaching, Jesus did not claim to be, and he was not, new and original in any such sense, or in any such degree, as will at all account for his unique influence. His doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood was no novelty. The Old Testament contained it, in such expressions as that of the Psalm, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Or, if this be deemed not universal enough to match the doctrine of Jesus, then take this, "His tender mercies are over *all* his works"; or this, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men!" No particularism there at least, more than in the teaching of Jesus, "He [your Father] maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good," language addressed, however, be it observed, to his *disciples,* and couched in the *second* person, "*Your* Father." The care of Jesus for the poor, the lowly, the despised, the outcast, contrasted as it is with the spirit predominant in all ancient pagan civilizations and cultures, was fully anticipated in the Old Testament Scriptures. There is no note whatever more recurrent and more insistent in the Bible of the Jews, than the injunction of regard for the poor of the earth. Great pains have been expended by hostile critics of Jesus in the attempt to trace

everything that he taught to some source earlier than himself. Such critics do not seem to consider that the more they show Jesus not to have been original, or at least not to have been new, in his teaching, the more they make wonderful the power and the spread of his influence. If there was nothing original and new in his doctrine, then his person, his character, *himself,* must alone be relied upon to furnish the explanation of the history that surrounded him living and that has followed him dead.

The one feature in Christ's preaching that might seem to offer an aspect of originality, consists in this, that the ultimate subject and object of his preaching was himself. No other teacher is in this regard comparable to Jesus. "*I* say unto you;" "These sayings of *mine;*" "If *I* then, your *Lord* and *Master;*" "One is your Master, even *Christ;*" "Come unto *me,* all ye that labor and are heavy laden and *I* will give you rest;" "Ye will not come to *me* that ye might have life;" "*I* am the way, and the truth, and the life;" "No man cometh unto the Father, but by *me.*" Extraordinary, unparalleled claims; still, it was only in the article of his thus identifying himself with the promised Messiah, that Jesus propounded in them anything to be called new. The Christ or Messiah of the Old Testament had for ages been preached or predicted in virtually equivalent terms. "Ye search [or, Search ye (imperative)] the Scriptures," said Jesus to the caviling Jews, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of *me.*" To two of his disciples, so it is told us by Luke, Jesus, after his resurrection, beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, interpreted in all the Scriptures the things concerning *himself.* In its essence, therefore, the doctrine of Jesus was not new doctrine, when he made himself the subject and the object of his own preaching.

We have hitherto considered only traits in Jesus the preacher belonging necessarily to him, because he was such as he was in his person and character, or else because he was exclusively religious in his aim. Let us now turn our

attention to traits in him that might be regarded as more incidental, more separable from the person and character of the preacher, more a matter of choice on his part, choice that might conceivably have been different from what it was. We proceed to treat of the *homiletic method* of Jesus.

In the first place, it is very noticeable that Jesus took advantage of the incalculable oratoric reinforcement to be drawn from fit *opportunity*. He hinged and jointed his instructions into particular occasions that either suggested them, or at least made them at a given moment especially apposite. The gospel historians are faithful in enabling us to make this useful note as to Christ's method in preaching.

Again, and in the same wise spirit of thrifty self-adjustment to occasion, Jesus, where occasion did not offer itself ready-made to his hand, would say something introductory to serve the purpose of an occasion. For instance, he would rouse attention and expectation by providing beforehand, over against what he had to say, some antithesis to it, real or apparent. "Ye have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'; but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil," is an illustration of this method on the part of Jesus. For we have here, not, of course, abrogation of civil law with replacement of it by lawlessness, by anarchy — which, in the sphere of human government, the absolute *non-resistance* here in terms enjoined, would be; but simply a rhetorical device for commanding attention and strengthening impression. Indeed the whole series of antitheses from which our example foregoing was drawn, may be said itself to constitute an illustration at large of the point in teaching method here brought to attention. Jesus wished to enforce the high severity of the personal righteousness required in the kingdom of heaven. He does it most effectively by contrast. He sets his own standard of righteousness over against the imperfect standard maintained by the popular religious teachers of his day. "Except your righteousness shall *exceed* the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into

the kingdom of heaven." This is the general statement, and then follows the series of instances in which Jesus points out the imperfections, or the faults, of the morality taught, as from the Mosaic institutes, by the best-reputed contemporary doctors of the law. It is the homiletic expedient exemplified of teaching by antithesis.

Paradox was with Jesus another favorite expedient of teaching. Perhaps no other teacher ever made proportionately more use of this expedient than did he. You cannot understand Jesus without often making allowance for paradox in his form of expression.

Jesus was sometimes even more frankly rhetorical than has yet been shown or suggested. Take, for instance, that saying of his, "Whosoever shall break one of the least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." Here, manifestly the rhetorical quest of balance and antithesis, of symmetry and epigram, in form of statement, leads Jesus to say what he did not desire to have taken in an absolutely literal sense. Hyperbole therefore, is yet another rhetorical expedient freely used by Jesus in his discourse. Consider the following: "If any man . . . *hateth* not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." The vast, the immeasurable, claim on his own behalf which Jesus habitually makes does not itself admit of overstatement; but the strictly just statement of it here made, is made by means of overstatement the most extraordinary. It is a case of hyperbole rendered more hyperbolic through accumulation and climax.

Of like nature, tho constituting a use of language not to be called hyperbole, paradox, or antithesis, is the rhetorical figure sometimes employed by Jesus in which, for the sake of saying a particular thing, he says a general thing, and says it so boldly and widely that it cannot be taken as literally and absolutely true. An example is his telling the Samaritan woman that the time was coming when men should not worship the Father at Jerusalem. Of course, he could not

have meant that there would ever come a time when there might not be individual instances of true worship paid in the holy city to the Father of spirits. We must beware, in the case of Jesus, as theologians long ago ought to have done in the case of the apostle Paul, not to make dogma out of mere rhetoric. I heard once a divinity-school professor, commenting publicly on that precept of Paul, "Let each esteem other better than themselves," say: "Jesus would not have issued such an injunction as that; it was excessive, extravagant." And that professor had New Testament interpretation for his department of instruction! Incredible that he could so have missed the spirit and method both of Jesus and of Paul. It was a curious illustration — seriously considered, a sad illustration — of the mischievous influence exerted by the current tendency to disparage Paul in contrast with that Divine Master who called Paul to represent him to men. Of course there was no danger that any one would be led by Paul's homiletic "extravagance" to undervalue himself too much. The danger, as Paul knew, was, and it is, all the other way.

The *parable* was one more feature in the preaching method of Jesus; perhaps the most commanding one of all. Certainly no one else ever approached Jesus in mastery of this teaching instrument. Evidently this teaching instrument is one that may equally well be employed to throw light or to throw darkness on the subject of discourse. That Jesus employed it now for the one and now for the other of these two opposite purposes, seems implied in the narrative of the evangelists. "Opposite," I call these purposes. But even when Jesus employed the parable for darkening truth, we may be sure that the darkness cast was cast for the gracious end of awakening desire for light. Hearers that really wished light would be given light. It is not for a moment to be supposed that Jesus ever darkened men's minds with parable, when a different method of instruction adopted by him would have had on those same men's minds an effect more salutary both for them-

selves and for the general interests of the kingdom of God in the world.

A further feature belonging to the homiletic method of Jesus was the just balance that he held between the two contrasted moods and tendencies of thought often designated, respectively, the optimistic and the pessimistic. Jesus was neither a pessimist nor an optimist, whether in his temperament or in his preaching. He mingled light and shadow, hope and fear. It cannot truly be said that either one of these two mutual opposites predominated in Jesus, whether we regard him in his person or in his preaching. It is true, indeed, that toward the close of his earthly career, the animating hope, if ever such hope lived in his breast, of great and saving results for his nation and for mankind, to flow from his preaching, seems to have suffered extinction; and the darkness, both of the doom impending over the guilty Jewish state, and of the end awaiting himself in Jerusalem, overshadowed more and more deeply his spirit. The predictions, couched now in parable and now in straightforward statement, that issued from his lips, were gloomy in the extreme. But even these were relieved with gleams of promise and of hope — for a remnant; and the discourse of Jesus as a whole, if not to be pronounced enlivening rather than depressing, was at least enlivening as well as depressing. To describe his preaching as mainly of a bright and cheering tenor, would be to make a serious critical mistake of disproportion in judgment. An incredibly wide critical mistake was made by that widely-accepted teacher of teachers, the late Dr. A. B. Bruce, when he applied the epithet "cheery" to characterize the prevalent spirit of Jesus, in his teaching and his life. Jesus saw things as they were, and not under any glamour of rose color thrown upon them from a light and happy temperament in himself. Solemnity, accordingly, is the prevailing character impressed upon the teaching of Jesus. If it is once said that Jesus "rejoiced in spirit," that note of mood in him produces on the reader an effect of the exceptional rather than the ordinary; and

the joy attributed seems, even in the case of exception, to have been a joy impressively solemn in character. The church has made no mistake, all these Christian centuries, in conceiving her Lord as a Man of Sorrows and Acquainted with Grief.

Accordant with the equipoise in Jesus between the sanguine and the despondent, in his way of regarding the world, is the even-handed justice with which he metes out his awards of praise and of blame. There is, however — and it could not be otherwise, if justice prevailed — a very noticeable predominance of blame over praise in the sentences from his lips. The note of rebuke, nay, even of heavy-shotted denunciation, is very strong (and this note not infrequently recurs), in the discourses of Jesus. Nothing could exceed the unrelieved, the red-hot, the white-hot, indignation and damnation launched by Jesus against certain classes and certain individuals among his hearers. The fierceness indeed is such that it is plainly beyond the mark of what could properly be drawn into precedent for any other preacher. Jesus is hardly in anything else more entirely put outside the possibility of classification with his human brethren, than in the article now spoken of.

Of the physical manner, that which may be called *elocution,* in Jesus as preacher, we have absolutely no notice in the histories extant of him. Once or twice indeed it is noted that he looked round about him with anger at the hardness of heart displayed by certain hearers of his; and once that looking upon a young man he loved him. Such hints, rare as they are, stimulate us to imagine that the features of Jesus were mobile and expressive during his speech. One thing, however, we instinctively feel to be certain, that even in his most terrible invectives there was no violence of tone, of gesture, or of manner. If fidelity would not permit him to appear relenting, equally, the quality of love in him would not permit him to be vindictive.

In fine, and somewhat abruptly, by way of even doing to the present topic a seeming disparagement required by truth,

it must be said that Jesus as preacher was, in his own view, nothing whatever in importance compared with Jesus the suffering Savior. "I, *if I be lifted up,* will draw all men unto me," he said, near the end, with a depth of meaning and pathos beyond reach of human plummet to sound; and, at the very last, "This is my *blood* of the covenant, which is *shed for many.*" What his preaching, even *his* preaching, had failed to effect, it remained for his obedience unto death, the death of the cross, to accomplish. His preaching itself thus acknowledged that his preaching alone was vain. Jesus as preacher preached Jesus as Redeemer by blood.

He set herein an example which every faithful minister of his gospel, to the end of the age, must follow.

XXI

PAUL

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

I HAVE first and last expressed myself in public largely, I cannot say fully, about the apostle Paul, both with tongue and with pen, both in prose and in verse. I have never publicly spoken or written on any subject with more profoundness, and more passion, of solemn conviction than on this.

The apostle Paul has thus engaged me, mind and heart, for two reasons. One reason is, the extraordinary fascination I have found in the transformed Christian personality of the man himself. Another reason, more commanding still, is my persuasion that at just this living moment of Christian history, belief in Paul, is, to use a famous phrase, the article of the standing or the falling church. Of course, by "belief in Paul," I mean much more than belief in him as a great man, a great preacher, a great saint, a great spiritual hero. I mean belief in him as what by eminence and with emphasis he claimed to be, namely, a chosen representative on earth, of the ascended and glorified Christ in heaven, enabled and commanded to speak and to preach with authority in his name." "Our Continuing Need of Paul" is the title of a paper of mine published in the "Homiletic Review," which was inspired by this sentiment about him. That paper is, however, only one of several papers, having different titles, through which I have sought to satisfy my sense of obligation in this matter. These papers, all of them, the reader interested may find by looking through the files of the "Homiletic Review," or, more readily, by consulting the indexes of that periodical.

It is a pleasure to me to make here an acknowledgment,

and it may be of profit to some among my readers. A little book by Tayler Lewis, entitled "The Divine-Human in Scripture," has a chapter on the apostle Paul, which, many years ago — many more indeed than I seem to myself to have lived since then — contributed in an important degree to form my conception of this great historic personage. I came at length so to conceive Paul that I was not able to appease my conscience, until I had written and published two volumes of narrative verse about him, which I ventured to name respectively, "The Epic of Saul" and "The Epic of Paul." Even so much expression about him in verse did not quite content my mind, and I have a somewhat sustained lyrical poem about him, which must be sought, by any who would see it, in a collective volume of "Poems" by the present writer. Unity, without identity and repetition, would, I hope, be felt to characterize my various expressions on this great subject. In the criticism following, I have tried, as was meet, to make everything contributory to the representation of Paul as a preacher.

PAUL

Among the preachers of the Christian past, later than Jesus, one figure stands out to the historical eye, salient, unique, incomparable. That figure is the apostle Paul. Concerning no other preacher of any age can it be said, as it can be said concerning him, not only that he left behind him an impression of himself and of his work deep enough and clear enough to make his preaching a subject of study perennially promising to be fruitful, but that he also drew after him a sequel of inexhaustible living influence on the world, such as, from the very first, destined him to become in effect a kind of contemporary to each succeeding generation of his fellow men to the end of time — a personal force continually born again with every age to an ever-new lease of life and power. Paul is therefore a preacher of to-day as well as of yesterday. The purpose of the paper now before the reader is to make a study, somewhat in the spirit of the living present, of this illustrious preacher of apostolic times.

In entering on this task, we are undoubtedly first struck, and most strongly struck, with the puissant and pungent personality of the man with whom we have to deal. If we recall Phillips Brooks's formula to express the value of the individual preacher, "Truth plus personality," we feel at once that in the case of Paul, however great might be the truth entrusted to the man to deliver, the man himself that delivered the truth would inevitably be a force, a moment, demanding to be taken very seriously into account. Beyond question, such a man as he was would have made himself profoundly felt, whatever might have been the cause that he espoused. Indeed Paul did make himself thus felt, first on one side, and then on the other, of the same cause. The demonstration therefore is perfect that his final enormous

influence, both living and posthumous, is due to something besides the mere fact that he had the good fortune to choose the winning side in a cause of supreme historic importance. If he had chosen in that cause the side which was destined eventually to lose, Paul would yet probably have lived in history, alongside of Julian the Apostate — full peer of that redoubtable opposer of Christianity, tho gifted with incalculably less outward advantage than the latter enjoyed for making his efforts in opposition effective.

The second thing to strike us, in our present study, is the absoluteness with which this great personality submitted itself, prostrated itself, only not annihilated itself, before the character, the will, the authority, of another. Paul at the feet of Jesus is certainly one of the most striking spectacles to be seen in history. Rightly regarded, that spectacle is argument to the degree of demonstration for the truth of supernatural Christianity. There is absolutely no way of accounting for the conversion of Saul the Pharisee into Paul the Christian apostle, no way of accounting for the continuous subsequent paradox of a man naturally so high and haughty in temper as was he, maintaining that historic attitude of Paul's, the attitude of adoration and of adoring obedience before Jesus — no way, but to suppose the New Testament story of Jesus' resurrection and ascension literally true. That supposition accounts for it completely; and, I repeat it, nothing else that man can imagine will. A lordly personality captive — captive to an unseen Lord; such is the aspect in which we are compelled to contemplate Paul, when we study him as preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For, in the preacher that Paul became, both these two contrasted, yet perfectly reconciled, characters, the native lordliness and the acquired lowliness, are conspicuously evident; as they were also both conspicuously influential in making him become such a preacher. But especially will the prolonged final attitude, on his part, of subjection to Jesus, of rapt and transcendent hero-worshiping devotion to the Ideal Man confessed by him the Son of God with

power, be found an important element in the intellectual and spiritual phenomenon presented to us in the preacher Paul. In speaking thus, I make indeed an extravagant understatement. That attitude of prostration before Jesus Christ is the one central controlling fact and force of the apostle Paul's evangelism. The conception exemplified in it of the normal relation in which Christ stands to all human souls as their rightful absolute Sovereign and Lord, gave to Paul the great master principle, the universal regulative law, of his preaching. This will duly appear in its proper place as we proceed with the analysis of our subject.

But we have not yet fully indicated the amazing nature of the spectacle exhibited to history in the apostle Paul's subject and obedient relation to Jesus Christ. Not only was this self-prostrating hero-worshiper himself, as we have seen, a man of supremely ascendant and dominating spirit — a man, in fact, such, in naturally self-asserting will, as to leave it little likely that he would be mastered by any one; he was also full of the pride of conscious genius and conscious high attainment. That is the next thing to strike us in the character of Paul. He was a man of genius, of genius accomplished by sedulous self-culture; and he was haughtily conscious of himself as such. True it is, many among Paul's intellectual acquisitions were of a sort to seem to us Westerns and moderns of comparatively little value. True also, his exercised skill in dialectics was affected with what we may, without disrespect, call a rabbinical quality that makes both its processes and its subsidiary results often almost null to an intelligence cultivated under our own very different conditions. But these considerations, justly weighed, only make more remarkable the solid wisdom that displays itself throughout Paul's utterances, no matter what may be their obsolete forms of expression, as well as the consummate art with which, in his speech, reason wielded logical weapons now, among us at least, no longer in use. Besides the Hebraic culture of which Paul was a master unsurpassed, he had enjoyed, we have hints for believing, a discipline also in

Greek literature and philosophy. At any rate, the impression is immediate and overwhelming, that we encounter in Paul a mind of the first order in original gift, and a mind adequately furnished and trained to do its work without waste of power and to the most fruitful effect.

Keeping in our thought these latter additional traits found in Paul, namely, his genius and his culture, with his pride in them both, let us call up again that paradox already spoken of in his character and career — the attitude which on a memorable occasion he suddenly assumed, and which afterward he steadily maintained, of absolute subjection, body, soul, and spirit, to the will of another. We have not yet felt the full proper effect of that paradox. When to the Roman Christians he introduced himself by letter in the words, "Paul, a bond-servant [slave] of Jesus Christ," it was only one outright express confession on Paul's part of the relation to Jesus in which he habitually, even if sometimes tacitly, stood before his hearers in preaching.

Shall we imagine a parallel, to make a little more appreciable the full meaning of this? But it will not be easy to imagine a parallel even approximately adequate. It is somewhat as if, a few years ago, the apostle and high priest of culture and refinement in English letters had staggered his admirers and disciples by writing himself down before the world, "Matthew Arnold, slave of Joe Smith" [the founder of Mormonism]. Joe Smith is not more a scorning to the Brahman caste in contemporary culture, than was Jesus of Nazareth to Paul's fellow Pharisees in his time. But Matthew Arnold was neither in gifts nor in reputation a match for what Paul was in relation to his Jewish contemporaries. Imagine then this, as written, or dictated, by Goethe himself: "Goethe, slave of Joe Smith," and you have a suggestion of the paradox it was for Paul to announce himself a "slave of Jesus Christ." But a suggestion only; for in this second proposed parallel, as also in the first, a very essential element of sufficiency is wanting. Paul was a born man of affairs, a born leader and lord of his fellows. If a modern Julius Cæsar,

superadding to the culture and genius of Matthew Arnold or of Goethe the commanding and organizing force of the founder of the Roman Empire, at the crisis and culmination of his self-aggrandizing career, were to scandalize his followers by announcing himself some fine morning "a bond-servant of Joe Smith," that would come nearer providing us the parallel we seek.

I have insisted thus on this point for a reason which will presently appear. But first let us dispose of a question which will naturally have suggested itself. What basis have we, either in contemporary description or in authentic original remains from the preacher's own lips or his hand, on which to found an estimate, at the same time trustworthy and complete enough to be useful, of Paul's preaching, its character and style? Well, it must be confessed that data are not so abundant as were to be wished. But neither, on the other hand, are the data existing so scanty as might at first blush be supposed. True, there is not extant a single fully reported formal sermon of Paul's. But there are sketches and fragments of several, so given as to throw a light clear and full beyond what was naturally to have been looked for, on the probable habitual matter and manner of the preacher. Besides this, we have very clear and satisfactory indication, from a competent reporter, of the line of thought and treatment followed by Paul in discourse on a signal occasion. I refer to the address before Felix and Drusilla. In this case, the narrative describes additionally the effect produced on the chief hearer. Such also is the fact with reference to two other incidents of Paul's oratoric experience, his address on Mars Hill, in Athens, and his speech to the mob from the stairs at the Castle Antonia in Jerusalem — while here also are supplied abstracts or sketches of what Paul said.

If it be objected, "These are not instances of regular sermons from Paul;" that may be admitted; but one address at least was probably as formal and regular a sermon as it was Paul's usual practice to preach to miscellaneous audiences. Paul, like Jesus, took occasions as he found them, or as they

were forced upon him, and preached accordingly; often doubtless with interruption — of question, of challenge, or of dissent — from his hearers. This would be in keeping with the well-known somewhat tumultuary temper and habit of Eastern public assemblies, even those of a comparatively ceremonious character; much more, of those casually, perhaps excitedly, brought together. Such public speaking as that, so called out, is of the most real and living kind in the world; and of all public speaking the kind most likely to furnish fruitful lessons in the art of eloquence. If now we add a reminder of that touching and beautiful address of Paul to the Ephesian elders, readers will see that we are by no means without the material for a fairly full and various examination and study of Paul's characteristics as preacher. Beyond all this, Paul's epistles are virtual sermons, often best understood when studied as such. And then — what was perhaps least to have been expected, and what also perhaps is least likely to have been duly considered by the ordinary reader of the New Testament — those epistles contain not only hints, but explicit statements, of the highest value for our purpose in understanding aright and intimately the true matter, method, spirit, and aim of this greatest of merely human preachers.

Let us go at once to an inestimably valuable statement of the kind now indicated. Paul had one master thought and feeling — thought fused in feeling, let us call it — which was ascendant and dominant in his preaching, as it was also in his life. That thought and feeling, that passion of both mind and heart, nay, of conscience and of will no less — for the whole being of Paul was one flame herein — what else was it, what else could it be, but consuming zeal to have the lordship of Christ universally acknowledged by men? The apostle's own personal experience made it impossible that this should not be so. And the evidence of the fact that it was so he has waterlined ineffaceably into the tissue and fabric of his writing. But we are not left to such mere inference, however overwhelmingly strong. Paul has put it

into express record and testimony. He says of himself as preacher, "We [I] preach . . . Christ Jesus as Lord."

One is not to read these words without attaching to them their own just and definite meaning. They mean precisely what they say. Paul in them was fixing, in permanent unchangeable phrase, a statement from which all generations following might know, first, what it was that he preached — it was Christ Jesus; and, second, how he preached Christ Jesus — it was as Lord. Not, observe, as Savior; not as Teacher; not as Example; much less, as Friend, as Brother. Paul preached Christ Jesus as Lord.

We have thus at once reached what is most central and most regulative in the principle and practice of Paul as preacher — the fact, the threefold fact, first, that he preached a person; second, that that person was Christ; and third, that the aspect or relation in which he preached Christ was the aspect or relation of lordship to men. But are we not staking too much upon a single text? Let us see. When at Philippi the frightened and penitent jailer cried out his question, "What must I do to be saved?" how did Paul reply? "Believe on the Lord Jesus." Consider what that reply imports. It requires faith. Yes. It requires faith in a person. Yes. That person is Jesus Christ. Yes. Faith in Jesus Christ as — what? Savior? No. The jailer's inquiry indeed was for the conditions of salvation. Yes, but the reply did not direct him, in terms, to a Savior. It directed him to a Lord. "Take Jesus Christ for your Lord, and you will be saved" — that is what in effect it said. Jesus Christ is a Savior to any man that takes him for Lord.

As thus to sinners repenting, so likewise to Christians, Paul preached forever obedience to Christ. In showing this to be true, I may safely ignore the critical objections that have been raised against the authentic Pauline authorship of the epistle to the Colossians, and treat that epistle here as being, what I believe it is indeed, the issue of the one mind and heart known to us in all the tide of time that could have produced such writing, namely, the apostle Paul. Take this,

then, as Paul's master-direction to Christians for the conduct of life: "Whatsoever ye do, do heartily as to the Lord; . . . for ye serve the Lord Christ." I do not forget that this particular instruction was directed especially to the slaves among the Colossian Christians. It was Paul's noble decree of emancipation for those unhappy bondmen. They were to escape servitude to their perhaps cruel masters, by feeling themselves bound in transcendent obligation to a quite different Lord, the same Lord that he himself acknowledged when he wrote those words, or dictated them, "Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ." What exquisite adaptedness of teaching on Paul's part was thus exemplified! The apostle and they were fellow-slaves, bound alike to serve the Lord Christ!

Obedience to Christ as to a Lord having supreme right to command — that is the key-note to Paul's effort, whether for unbelievers or for believers, whether with tongue or with pen. Indeed he expressly describes his mission in the world as having that idea for its comprehensive end and aim. "We [I]," he says, in writing to the Roman Christians, "have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations." Even that "faith," of which Paul has so much to say, is conceived and presented by him as an act, or a state, of obedience to Christ. In the midst of a fervid discussion of the subject of righteousness by faith, Paul speaks of *obeying* the gospel as a thing in his mind equivalent to believing, nay, identical with that. Observe this Pauline consecution of thought: "Not all *obeyed* the gospel. For Esaias saith, Who hath *believed* our report?"

We have discovered the chief thing characteristic of Paul's preaching, when we have fully seen that the omnipresent object of it all was to get Christ obeyed. But we need to understand obedience to Christ in the profound, the all-inclusive, sense in which Paul understood it. It was with Paul no mere outward conformity to specific moral, much less to any ceremonial, command. In Paul's view, there was nothing in all the being of the man that was not bound

to the obedience of Christ. To that obedience was to be brought captive every thought. When a preacher has seized this idea, when he has then let this idea seize him and master him, that preacher has gone the farthest that any one step could carry him toward becoming such a preacher as Paul was.

After the attitude on Paul's part already now ascertained, of absolute obedience to Christ, next to strike us is a trait in him of even greater importance to distinguish his individual quality among preachers, namely, his sense of peculiar, incommunicable relation to Christ as recipient and trustee of immediate revelation from Him. This sense on his part is a note that keys all his communications, as preacher and teacher, to his fellow men. It is impossible for the attentive student to ignore the characteristic in Paul that I thus point out. It is a trait different from mere ardor of conviction. It is a trait different from natural positiveness, self-assertion, spirit of domination. These latter traits also marked Paul as preacher and teacher. But over and above these, supporting these while qualifying them, was an authentic, unmistakable, sense on Paul's part of being recipient and trustee of special, supernatural revelation from Jesus Christ. This would be clear enough from the general tenor of Paul's utterance; but he has put the matter into express and emphatic statement — statement so express, so emphatic, as to warrant us in saying that language is not capable of asserting such a claim, if Paul has not asserted this claim for himself. To the Galatians he wrote: "The gospel which was preached by me is not according to man; for I also did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through revelation of Jesus Christ." There follows a solemn attestation, nay, an *oath* sworn by him to the truth of his words on this point: "Now as to the things which I write to you, behold, before God, I lie not." If Paul was a sane man, and also not a conscious perjured liar, he preached and taught under the influence of direct supernatural communication as to what he preached and taught, re-

ceived immediately from Jesus Christ Himself. The watch-word current now, "Back to Christ!" when it is used — as it is sometimes, perhaps most commonly, used — for the comparative discrediting of Paul, as a source of Christian doctrine, has the effect, if not the purpose, of disloyalty both to Paul and to Christ. If Paul was a sane man, and if he told the truth, then there is no good sense in calling us back from him to the evangelists, for our information as to what Christ's gospel is. Paul is as good a reporter as is Matthew, for instance. If there is any discrimination between them to be made, Paul is even a better reporter than Matthew. He was a finer intelligence, and he was more thoroughly trained. He had as much sympathy with his Master. He reported apparently with less interval of time than did Matthew after the receiving of the thing to be reported. What point is there in favor of Matthew to place him superior to Paul as representative of Christ through tongue or pen? That is, always provided Paul was neither insane nor mendacious. "Back to Christ?" Yes, but to Christ as Paul represented Christ, not less than to Christ as Christ was represented by the evangelists. Unless Paul's prodigious and beneficent influence on history was exerted by a lunatic or a liar, we are shut up to admit, what stares us in the face from every page of Paul's writing, that he worked his work as one supernaturally communicated with by the risen and ascended Christ. This is a brand broad and deep on all we have from the brain of Paul.

Another conspicuous characteristic in Paul as preacher is the tone of authority with which he speaks. This tone of authority is no bold mere assumption on his part; and nowhere is it for a moment felt to be such. So far from being an assumption, an arrogation, prompted by pride or by consciousness of superiority or of worth, it is always the sign in him, the unmistakable sign, of a sense which he has — a sense which has him, say rather — of an investiture put upon him that he may in no wise rid himself of. He could not divest himself of it if he would. It is a trust received

from God. He is helplessly the steward of it. But of course I do not mean that his stewardship is against his own will. His will joyfully consents, but his will consents humbly. He wonders and adores that he should have been thus chosen. He expressly recognizes that it is a "grace," as well as an "apostleship," that he has received. But he never lets his sense of the grace overcome his sense of the apostleship. He never for an instant doubts that he speaks as the oracle of God.

The extraordinary accent of authority coupled with humility, thus found in Paul, is vitally related to that in the man which was first to attract our attention in the present paper, namely, his attitude of absolute obedience to Christ. In truth, the exercise of authority on his part is less in spite of his humility than because of his humility. It is an essential part of obedience with him. He could not obey Christ without using authority; for he is bidden use it. Hence the nigh unparalleled example that Paul gives us of authority without wavering but equally without assumption. It is really mere steadiness of obedience. There is no self-assertion in it, no egotism. In form, Paul does indeed now and again assert himself. But, in spirit, there is still no self-assertion; for it is Christ in him, or it is he in Christ, that speaks, and the speaking is for Christ and not for Paul. With perfect simplicity, in absolute sincerity, indignantly he asks in self-effacement, "Was Paul crucified for you?"

Of course the authority that Paul thus purely exerts relates itself not only to his spirit of obedience toward Christ, but also to the consciousness that he inalienably has of being in a peculiar relation to Christ as recipient and trustee of immediate revelation from him. This latter relation to Christ Paul claimed for himself with definition and with emphasis such, that if his claim of it had been false, the false claim itself would inevitably and justly have defeated his influence on the world. That his influence, in quality as in quantity, was not defeated, is, wisely considered, proof approaching the point of demonstration, that his claim of

peculiar authority supernaturally bestowed was a true claim.

We have considered two capital characteristics of Paul as preacher, such in their nature that they can not be presented for emulation on the part of the preachers of to-day. No one now can speak, and speak with a sane consciousness like the sane consciousness which Paul had, of speaking by direct, unmediated communication of truth from Christ; and no one now can speak in the exercise of such authority as was Paul's.

But Paul's absolute obedience to Christ may be emulated; as also may be emulated Paul's absolute fidelity to the idea of making obedience to Christ from all men the comprehensive object of preaching. And I have now to bring forward another trait of Paul as preacher in which he may well be emulated. Paul preached in a tone of intense personal conviction. It might seem that Paul's sense of peculiar relation to Christ as Christ's oracle, should have rendered faith, on his part — faith rising to the degree of intense personal conviction — a matter of course, a matter, as it were, of necessity. But such was not the case. That this is true is shown by Paul's own confession. He says: "We [I] also believe and therefore also we speak." This is the language, not of authority, nor of present overcoming consciousness divinely impressed upon the user of the language, that he is the inspired and infallible organ of revelation from God; it is the language of faith, of personal conviction. Of the same character is the language of that magnificent climax, ending the eighth chapter of Romans, which, by sheer virtue of its unsurpassable eloquence — an eloquence that indeed transgresses the bounds of mere eloquence, and passes into the realm of sublime poetry — has become one of the most familiar commonplaces of literature: "For I am *persuaded* that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Je-

sus our Lord." The triumphant, the soaring, quality of the faith that thus expresses itself, must not blind us to the fact, that it is faith, true human faith, not an easy acceptance on Paul's part of peculiar divine inspiration. Let us make no mistake. Paul, we must suppose, had as much opportunity, and as much need, of exercising faith, as has any ordinary Christian. He had to have faith in order to receive from Christ the communication that Christ wished to impart. Paul's faith was the ever-open receptacle for the treasures of truth of which he thus became steward. He preached, therefore, with faith, with conviction, vivid and vivific, and not simply as a possessed, and, so to speak, involuntary, mouthpiece for the Spirit of God.

Born of his conviction was that inextinguishable zeal which was a further characteristic of Paul as preacher. Paul's zeal was as tinder to his energy. The two together engendered an incomparable locomotive force lodged in him — like the enclosed and enkindled powder that bears the rocket on its aspiring parabola into the upper air. There was never another such an unresting embodiment as was Paul, of disinterested zeal in propagandism, enlisted on behalf of an apparently hopeless cause. When just consideration is given to all the conditions of Paul's case, his single-handedness, his nakedness of apparent weapon against such a conspiracy of hostile powers, his poverty in material resources of whatever kind, his physical ill-health and weakness, the arrests and imprisonments to which he was subject, the indignities, the cruelties, he suffered — when these things are duly considered, and over against them is placed the enormous, the yet unexhausted, the apparently inexhaustible, success that he achieved, making the world and making history new, I confidently submit that no parallel to Paul can be found among men I thus speak counting out of calculation for the moment the supernatural coefficient that multiplied the results of Paul's activity. I am far from ignoring that supernatural coefficient. But, remembering it well and according to it much, I still reckon

Paul's personal achievement, quality and quantity both considered, something that surpasses what can fairly be credited to any other individual human force working in history. Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, Napoleon Bonaparte, are not worthy to be named in the comparison And it was the extraordinary, the amazing *vis vitæ*, pure energy set on fire of zeal, in Paul, that — exceptional divine assistance being for the moment left out of the account — should perhaps mainly be esteemed the secret of his power. Such a heart-beat of force, forever equal, and a little more than equal, to its need, as throbs in Paul, like the pulse of a great ocean steamer's engine making her whole hulk tremble! It might seem that the energy thus attributed to Paul belonged to the man, rather than to the preacher. But the man and the preacher are always inseparable. And what differences preachers one from another, with respect to the total volume of influence that they finally exert, is, I am persuaded, as much as anything the original endowment of *energy* which they put into their work. Paul's prodigious energy as a man was not only an indispensable but a very important, element in his power as a preacher.

I have already alluded to the advantage belonging to Paul in the possession of an intellect thoroughly trained and furnished for the work that it had to do. Paul had thought long and deeply; and the quality that only long and deep thought can give to a man's intellectual product, is everywhere recognizable in Paul's writing. We are quite warranted in assuming that the character of his preaching corresponded. It was a thinker, not a mere homilist, that so easily struck out that fine generalization, with its illumining comment, which surprises and delights us as we read the thirteenth chapter of Romans: "He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor:

love therefore is the fulfilment of the law." Luminous general observations open vistas and prospects into wide realms of truth, at frequent intervals throughout Paul's writings. But what need of particular instances to illustrate Paul's intellectual height and breadth, and the richness and ripeness of his thought? It suffices to remember that one of the very greatest intellectual, as well as spiritual, achievements in history, I mean the erection of Christianity, out of Judaic narrowness and sterility, into a world-wide religion fit for all time, was due, by eminence, to the sympathetic comprehension by Paul, as a thinker, of his Divine Master's thought and purpose for the rescue and elevation of mankind.

But not less Paul the thinker was also Paul the man of affairs. There is no closet atmosphere about his writing; and still more impossible was it that there should be any such atmosphere about his preaching. He knew *men,* as one who was himself a fellow man; not simply *man,* as being a philosopher. He lived and thought and felt and spoke in a world of concrete realities. Hence the omnipresent pertinency, the practical adaptedness, of his teaching. He had instant infallible sagacity of the situation, the need. "Making a difference"— his own words of advice to the young preacher — might be taken as the maxim and motto on which he himself practiced.

Out of this indescribable realness, livingness, in Paul, sprang his instinct and habit of availing himself of opportunity. It was a perfectly conscious aim with him to be, in the best sense of that ambiguous word, an alert opportunist. He said of himself that he became all things to all men in order that he might by all means save some. "Redeeming the opportunity" (that is, making thrifty use of the passing occasion's particular chance), a combination of words having, where it occurs, the force of a precept, is another expression from Paul's pen indicative of the value he set on the idea of matching the moment with just that moment's fit word.

Of close kin to the trait in Paul's preaching last named,

yet distinguishable from that, and worthy of separate note was his habit of dealing, as Christ also dealt, with individual souls, not less — perhaps more — than with masses of men. This might seem to be a pastoral, rather than a homiletic, habit; and such no doubt it predominantly was. But no preacher who is also pastor, as was Paul, can fail to have his preaching profoundly affected by the pastoral quality; and that quality is, discriminating attention to individual souls. Paul emphatically testifies to the particularity of his concern for those to whom he brought the Gospel. This testimony is marked with repetition, as well as with emphasis, of statement; and it is very instructive. To the Ephesian elders meeting him at Miletus, Paul said: "Ye know . . . how . . . I . . . have taught you publicly and from house to house. . . . I ceased not to warn every one night and day." To the Colossians, he wrote: "Whom [that is, Christ] we preach, warning every man and teaching every man that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Nothing could exceed the individualizing spirit of such faithfulness in preaching as Paul thus describes, claiming it to be the habit of his own apostleship. To the Thessalonians: "Ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father does his children." Paul then did not deal with men as it were by wholesale merely; he aimed his lasso at individual hearts and consciences. To change the figure, his discourse was like a net, flung over his hearers, that captured them one by one, each, so to speak, in a separate mesh specially prepared for him and specifically aimed at him. How completely that instinct, and that cultivated habit, in Paul, of which I shall speak presently, I mean his quality of gentleman, saved this intent individualizing of his hearers from degenerating into offensive personality, the signal example of his address before Felix well shows. Here Paul gave to a cruelly unjust, a grossly licentious, Roman ruler a discourse on righteousness, on self-control, on impending judgment. He was faithful

enough to make his guilty hearer tremble; but at the same time gentlemanlike enough not to affront him.

It need hardly be said that naturally such preaching as that thus described had for its object practical results immediately to follow. I have just now arrested my writing to take, by a rapid perusal of the narrative, a fresh impression of the character of the history recorded in the Acts, in that part of the history which is concerned with the activities of Paul. There is nothing more striking about it than the intense livingness that throbs in it, and the abounding fruitfulness of the apostle's labors. He went like a reaper through a field white to the harvest. He appears everywhere in the act of gathering sheaves. If he struck a region or a class of people that yielded no return of fruit to his labors, he went elsewhere. He was not satisfied unless he saw of the travail of his soul. This spirit of desire in him tended irresistibly to its own fulfilment. It will always do so in every preacher's case.

Ancient eloquence in general seems not to have indulged, so much as modern eloquence (especially perhaps among English-speakers) tends to indulge, in quest of illustration to enliven and enlighten discourse. Paul, accordingly, judged by current standards, could not be said to abound in illustrations; and he was far enough from being the master in this kind that Jesus was. Still he did illustrate strikingly, and this, as in contrast with all the other New-Testament writers and speakers, deserves to be especially noted of Paul. Witness his consummate analogy adduced in setting forth the truth concerning the fact of the resurrection. Witness again his analogy of the human body with its various parts to the church of Christ, whole and one, yet made up of individual members. Then, too, his vivid imagery drawn from the equipment and discipline of the Roman soldier.

A man with *savoir-vivre* so abundant, tact so swift and so versatile, as were Paul's, could of course not be wanting in the social accomplishment of good manners. But Paul

had a courtesy that went much deeper, and was therefore much surer, than good manners. He was a gentleman to the very heart of him. To be sure, it is from Peter — from whom less perhaps than from Paul, was to have been expected such an instruction — that we have the precept, "Be courteous." The school of Christ proved to Peter, as it proves to all who are willing learners in it, an admirable school of good manners. But Paul, in his more wide-sweeping way, says the same thing, and more, when he says, "Render to all their dues," which is the very definition of politeness. And Paul, under all circumstances, exemplified in his own conduct what he thus taught. Once indeed he was provoked into a form of disrespect toward a Jewish ruler who had outraged him beyond endurance. But how quick, how perfect, how consummately high-bred, the self-recovery, and the amends that he made! The moment's lapse — if lapse it ought to be called, that fine indignation against insult and wrong — served but the purpose of bringing out into stronger relief the exquisite self-control which was Paul's habit, and which is the basis of courtesy. Paul had so much unavoidable occasion to challenge men's passions and to cross men's prejudices, that it was immense gain to him not to affront anybody needlessly. The present writer, during a period of his life in which it was a part of his duty to advise young preachers, proposed to them as a maxim of wise pulpit discourse the following: "Yield to your audience in every respect save that one respect in which it is your present object to get your audience to yield to you." Paul exemplified this precept in his practice.

I shall seem to have been describing a negative rather than a positive quality in thus attributing to Paul the grace of high breeding. In fact, however, Paul sought the good will of those with whom he was dealing — self-evidently always seeking it for their advantage and not for his own — by a positive practice of his, proper to him as a well-bred man, which deserves separate mention. He was a generous bestower of praise — not indeed an undiscriminating,

but a generous, bestower. The generous measure with which he bestowed commendation might indeed sometimes almost have made Paul seem to be a flatterer; but he always praised with such exquisite delicate tact as could be born only of innermost truth and sincerity. And then besides, commendation from him had a certain peculiar character of its own, fitted to make the persons commended feel, less that they deserved it, than that they should be glad to deserve it better; and this all the more because they likewise felt perforce that the commendation was bestowed to that very end, and not merely for the sake of giving them pleasure, much less for the sake of winning their favor. Preachers may learn from Paul a fruitful lesson both in the practical value of praise, and in the holy art of bestowing it. Note the infinite grace and delicacy with which, for instance, in the following, from the epistle to the Romans, the didactic earnestness, the magisterial superiority, of the apostle is modulated into the urbanity and complaisance of the fellow-disciple and the peer. Who could resist the sweet seduction of praise so almost unobservably insinuated? Who could fail to be inspired by it and uplifted? "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is [and now as if the writer would change his tone and put himself alongside of those to whom he was writing, in a relationship of equal reciprocal helpfulness playing back and forth between him and them], that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of ye and me."

What a note of pathetically joyful appeal by praise is sounded in this rhythmical verse from the heart of Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians: "Therefore, my brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved"! There is no praise equal to the praise which consists in an outburst of affectionate exclamation like that.

Was there a danger near — the danger of conceding too much, of being over-complaisant, even of seeming sub-

servient? Paul avoided this danger; still, not so as to escape the charge from his enemies of loving the favor of men — in short, of being a trimmer. He was aware of being thus accused, and when, on one capital occasion, he felt obliged to use sharper language than he liked ever to do to his Christian brethren, he alluded to the false accusation. "Do I now please men?" he asked, with a moment's indignant, but not ungentle, sarcasm. Immediately recovering his more natural tone of candor and earnestness, he appealed to his life, to his apostleship, to his relation of bond-slave to Christ, for his vindication against the charge. If my object had been to please men, he said, I certainly should not have gone about to accomplish my object by making myself a bond-servant of Christ. *That* was not *then* the road to popularity!

Such was Paul's sensitive fondness for deferring to others, for being complaisant, that, when he had imperative need to use sternness, he found it easier to do so in letters than in face-to-face contact with men. This habit of soft-heartedness in him sometimes prompted those who opposed Paul to seek their ends by making, to the persons concerned, a certain representation about the apostle which has been strangely misunderstood by many readers of the New Testament, even by many New-Testament commentators. Thus Paul's opponents told the Christians of Corinth that however stern he might be in his letters, they need have no apprehension of his being seriously severe, when he should actually be present among them. He makes great demonstration beforehand, they said, of what he will do when he comes; but he does not carry out his threats. His letters are formidable; but his behavior when he is personally present does not at all correspond. As the passage is translated, "His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible." Paul himself cites this language, to assure the Corinthians that, if need continue, he will in truth show himself when he comes all that is warned and threatened in his letters. The phrase

"bodily presence," which the context proves to mean only presence in the body, as distinguished from absence, has misled students to find here an allusion to Paul's personal appearance and to his style of elocution, both which ideas are remote from the thought of the passage. Of Paul's physical appearance we really know nothing, and nothing of his style of elocution — one remarkable trait of the latter excepted, a trait to be noted hereafter in its proper place and order. We certainly have no reason to think that Paul's physical equipment for oratory was in any respect despicable; tho, had this been the case, it would only increase the wonder of his apostolic achievement.

Having spoken so strongly — not too strongly — of Paul's instinct, and habit, and skill, of adjusting himself to occasion and need, I must now not fail to speak as strongly — and too strongly I could not speak — of his eventual unswerving fidelity, both in word and in deed, to his convictions of truth and of duty. Nobody could flame hotter than he in denouncing iniquity; nobody use language more towering, more overaweing, in vindication of what was vital to the doctrine of Christ. "Tho we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema"— so he wrote to the Galatians. He dictated the letter. One can imagine the inspired man dilating his form and his stature, and raising his hands in commination to heaven, as, pacing his room, he poured out those burning words. Then, lest the very passion of those words should, by raising a suspicion of hyperbole, partly defeat their purpose, hear him immediately repeat them: "As we have said before, so say I now again: If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema"— as if to give notice that not one jot was to be abated from the fulness of the meaning of that which he had thus so startlingly protested. I have no need to cite anything in illustration of Paul's power and his will in invective; but that branding imprecation of his upon Elymas, the sorcerer at

Paphos in Cyprus, springs to my mind, "O full of all guile and all villainy, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness," etc.— words so fierce in their energy that, as one reads them even now in translation, they almost seem capable themselves of working by their own unaided virtue the blinding effect that followed them — yet how restrained withal they seem, as if "half his power he put not forth"!

But Paul greatly preferred to use gentleness; and his gentleness has always a certain fine enhancement of effect, due to a sense inspired all the time that the user of it had weapons at command that he might employ to compel, or to punish, where he could not persuade. What eloquence there is in an appeal like the following: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ"! "I Paul myself beseech"! Paul seems conscious of something paradoxical in what he is saying, or rather in the attitude he here assumes. That a man like him, a man so sensitively alive to the just demands of his own character — that he, Paul himself, should appear in the posture and act of one "beseeching"! And then, as if to say, It is not I, the natural Paul; I "beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ"! How exquisite, how inimitable, how like Paul — Paul alone, of all men!

Strangely enough, Paul's popular reputation is perhaps chiefly that of one who by eminence and by preference was a logician. This is due probably to the disproportionate and distorting use which the systematic theologians have made of Paul's writings. He does indeed reason in them — after the manner natural to a man of his race, and his time, and his mental training. But Matthew Arnold, sadly as he failed in criticising Paul, was quite right in insisting that such writing as the apostle's was not dogma but literature. As already suggested, Paul *preached* in his epistles; he did not construct a theological system in them. Still, there was the substance and there was the effect of argumentation in Paul's representations of the Gospel. In other words, there was an intellectual basis to his discourse. If Paul had not

been so gravely misrepresented as predominantly logical in his mental make-up and method, I should have felt it necessary to say, with the emphasis which just proportion seemed to me to require, that an important element of his preaching was the appeal in it to reason and judgment. As it is, I need only mention the undoubted fact, and try to abate the estimate generally prevailing of its relative importance in a true appreciation of Paul. He was indeed a doctrinal preacher. But he was still more ethical than doctrinal. His doctrine was for the sake of conduct. His epistolary sermons will, in important instances, be found to hinge their whole inculcation on some connective word or phrase that turns the discourse from doctrinal exposition to insistence on right behavior. Thus, in the epistle to the Ephesians, after three chapters of lofty doctrine, the pivotal word "therefore" carries over the discourse to inculcation of practice corresponding to the doctrine. "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, exhort you to walk worthy of the calling with which ye were called." The motive everywhere is love to Christ, born of Christ's love to men. It is Christ's atoning love, His love shown in sacrifice of Himself, His vicarious love. "Who loved me, and gave himself up for me," is the sort of language that Paul characteristically used. To the Ephesian elders he spoke of the "Church of God" as purchased by God with His own blood. Such language makes Paul's ethical teaching differ by the whole heaven from the ethical teaching of those who treat Jesus as a mere Teacher, and not as a suffering Savior. It is noticeable that even when Paul seems most purely theological. when, for example, he is setting forth his master doctrine of justification by faith, he expresses himself in language determined by his favorite principle of obedience. Thus he speaks of persons not "submitting" themselves to the righteousness of God. He conceived of the doctrine practically. Saving faith was an act and attitude of obedience.

I am led naturally now to the naming of a further trait of first importance in Paul's preaching — a trait which has in-

deed already been shown, as could not but be the case, in occasional glimpses throughout these pages, but which has been purposely reserved, for full and fit signalization, to the conclusion of the present paper. No one whose attention has been held to read what has herein previously been said and implied about Paul's just intellectual rank among men, will commit the mistake of imagining that I underestimate his gifts of mind, when I say, as I do say, that after all it was Paul's heart, almost more than his brain, that made him the preacher that he was. If we may judge from the documents in evidence, his was the greatest and the tenderest heart — by far the greatest and the tenderest heart — that beat in the breast of any one of the apostles of Christ. It was Paul's power of love and of all lovely emotions, quite as much as it was his intelligence, that enabled him so sympathetically, beyond all peers of his own time, or of any time since, to take up the thought and feeling of his Lord.

It is not too much to say that the "mind" of Christ — that is, the peculiar doctrine and spirit of Christ — is exhibited in Paul with such a fulness of varied application to life, that the rich and beautiful representations of the four Evangelists would be incalculably less effective than they are, if they were without that inspired apostolic commentary to interpret and apply them. Christ chose with marvelous wisdom, when he chose Paul to be his apostle to the Gentiles. We dishonor Christ when we seek to honor him by disparaging Paul in comparison with the Evangelists. We could scarcely better afford to dispense with Paul's Epistles, than we could afford to dispense with the Gospels. And, rightly read, those epistles present Paul to us as a great magnetic heart, charged full from Christ with power to move a mighty brain, to sway an imperious will, to subdue an importunate conscience — in short, to swing a whole majestic manhood, unswerving through a lifetime, along an orbit of joyful, harmonious obedience to a Master loved and adored as at once human and divine. Yes, let

us not fear to say it — for it is the truth — Paul was markedly an emotional preacher.

This we know, not only from contemporary narrative, but from Paul's own abundant confession, nay, profession and testimony. For this great man was emotional to the degree of frequent, if not habitual, capitulation to tears in his preaching. Such meaning seems unmistakably implied in this from his address of farewell to the Ephesian elders: "Watch and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." That is one only of two allusions made by him, in the course of the same address, to his own tears. Even in writing his letters — and therefore without the incitement to emotion furnished in the presence of a sympathetic and responsive audience — Paul, he himself tells us, had fits of weeping. He repeatedly appeals to his tears in witness of his love, his longing, and his earnestness. To the Corinthians, in his second letter, he said: "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart [this refers to a previous occasion that had required severity from him] I wrote unto you with many tears." Then, as if not thus to excite in them a painful sympathy for himself, he adds, with an inimitable delicacy characteristic of Paul alone: "Not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." Once more, in his letter to the Christians of Philippi, he writes: "Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."

Of course, due allowance is to be made for the naturally more demonstrative impulse and habit of the East, as contrasted with the phlegm and self-repression of our race. But the difference is not all a difference of race and of climate. Paul is the only one of the apostles of whom such emotional outbreaks appear to have been characteristic. Peter indeed, on one memorable occasion, "wept bitterly"; but that, so far as the record enables us to judge, was a solitary exception for Peter; and it appears a case without

parallel in the experience of any other apostle, save Paul. In truth, Peter's case does not, even for that one exceptional occasion of his weeping, constitute any parallel to Paul's case. Peter "wept bitterly," for the tears he shed, noble, affectionate tears though they were, were also in part, tears of remorse and of shame. Paul's tears were altruistic, vicarious, sacrificial; he wept them sweetly rather than "bitterly."

Now I am quite ready to admit that Paul's readiness to shed tears might justly be reckoned not very significant — if indeed it were not rather even to be reckoned significant of weakness on his part — except for a certain highly important interpretative fact which must be taken into account in connection. That fact is this: Paul habitually spoke and wrote under an influence of emotion in his heart such that tears were not unfrequently the inevitable expression of it. Paul's tears were not the easy outflow of a shallow sensibility. They marked the culmination and climax of a great elemental passion in his soul — a tenth wave, so to speak, of the sea in storm. Whatever Paul thought he thought passionately, whatever he believed he believed passionately, in short, he was passionate in whatever he did.

I can not be misunderstood to mean that Paul was a creature of unreasoning impulse, or that he was blindly impetuous and heady in a frenzy of zeal. On the contrary, no man was more considerate than he. But he moved, when he did move, with his whole heart. The entire man was engaged. Still, no word less intense than "passionate" would adequately express the fervor of the movement in which, with Paul, both heart and brain were perpetually astir. Not that he could justly be described as lacking in capacity of repose. But his repose he found in the absolute unobstructedness of uniform advance toward a goal. It was a peace like the peace of God, which is reconciled, we know, with incessant activity. "My Father worketh hitherto," Jesus said. It was Paul who taught: "Let the peace of God ["Christ" rather, instead of "God," should perhaps be the

reading] rule in your hearts." That teaching was out of a spirit in the teacher that had itself realized the peace recommended. Passion reconciled with peace, was Paul's experience. His love of Christ was a passion. His love of his fellow Jews was a passion. His love of all men was a passion. He adored passionately. Witness the fountain-jets of doxology that every now and then unexpectedly, in the midst of his epistles, burst like the vent of an artesian well out of the levels of quasi-logical discussion. It was a passionate heart adoring, that forced them forth. Nobody reads Paul right, who does not feel the oceanic ground-swell of emotion that continually heaves underneath the words. And in his preaching beyond doubt the passion was manifold more than it could be in his writing. No cold-hearted logician, like what Calvin seems, was Paul. And then the infinite, all-loving condescensions with which this great man stooped to the state of the lowly about him! How he ministered to the slave! How he toiled with his hands for his own support while he preached! "These hands," he eloquently called the Ephesian elders to witness, "have ministered to my necessities, *and* to those that were with me." (I could not refrain from italicizing that conjunction — lest some reader should partly miss the implication it introduces.) His love was no cloistered, seclusive, serene sentiment supported by mystic contemplation. It was a hard-working, practical, ministrant affection.

When I think of this man with his magnificent gifts, devoted, all of them, laboriously devoted, to the self-sacrificing service of his fellow men in life-long absolute, adoring obedience to the crucified Nazarene, recognized by him as the Son of God with power; when I think of his claims to be recipient and trustee of unmediated revelation straight from Christ Himself — claims that must be acknowledged as valid, unless they were either a wild hallucination or a monstrous lie; when I think of all this, and then hear men crying, "Back to Christ from Paul!" I feel like replying to them: "Nay, but back from the Paul of your false con-

ception to the real Paul of the Acts and the Epistles; and, through this Paul, nearer and ever nearer to that Christ whom he, more perfectly than any other of the sons of men, knew and loved and represented in word and in deed!"

Two more characteristics, paradoxically united in the apostle Paul as preacher, must still be taken into account before our analysis of his extraordinary personality and genius can be considered even approximately complete. Paul was at once a master of administrative detail — that is, a practical business man — and a mystic.

In claiming thus for Paul that he possessed the qualifications of a thorough business man, I have not in mind that large capacity of organization belonging to him, which gave him such success in establishing churches and in maintaining effective oversight of them through suitable subordinate agents selected and directed by himself. This gift and skill of his I have already adverted to, in speaking of him as an accomplished man of affairs. But Paul, to such organific power of statesmanship, superadded a certain other talent, — a talent far humbler indeed, yet most useful, namely, the sagacity to perceive what was needed in the way of means and methods for the carrying out of designs projected. What other man than Paul could preach, as Paul could preach, the duty of almsgiving, by ennobling appeals to motives the highest, the deepest, the most elemental? The climax of such appeals from Paul was finely characteristic of the man that he was: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, how tho he was rich, for your sake he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." Yet he did not leave it to eloquence, even overmastering eloquence like this, to produce its effects unaided. He generated the motive power in superabundance, but then he did not neglect to provide the wheels, the bands, and all the mechanism necessary, to transmit that power to the point of fruitful application in actual work. It was Paul who, in just a pregnant line or two of one of his letters, struck out the plan for systematic giving which is now almost uni-

versally acknowledged to be, for both its immediately productive, and its permanently instructive, purpose, the most effective plan conceivable by the wit of man (1 Cor. xvi. 1-4):

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem; and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me."

In quoting thus from his language a little more than was absolutely necessary to set out Paul's plan for systematic giving, I have had a conscious object. I wished to let my readers notice in what manner, with what admirable business foresight, circumspection, and tact, Paul arranges for the sending of the Corinthians' benevolences to their proper destination in Jerusalem. The Corinthian Church was to elect messengers, and Paul would equip these messengers with letters of introduction from his own hand. (The meaning may be that the credential letters should issue from the church; but I have preferred the marginal rendering [which, as I reconsider this paper, I find to be also the preference of the American Revisers]). And he would even go himself, if it seemed desirable; but in no case alone, or as a substitute for the messengers elected by the Corinthian Church; these men should by all means accompany him.

The reason for such precaution on Paul's part would have been obvious enough; but we are not left to infer it. In a subsequent letter to the same church, the Corinthian, the Apostle expressly states his reason (2 Cor. viii. 20): "Avoiding this," he says, "that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us." It should be left in no man's power to hint that perhaps Paul converted the gifts meant for the distressed Christians in Jerusalem in some part to his own personal use and advan-

tage. Then follow these words, worthy to be written in letters of gold as a maxim of prudence for every trustee of charitable gifts: "For we take thought for things honorable not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." Paul might, of course, and no doubt he would, have had, silently within his own breast, the same delicate scruple of honor in the discharge of his fiduciary responsibility, without guarding himself, expressly and openly, as he did, for Christ's sake, against possible suspicion of malversation in office. For that intimate exercise of scruple he needed only to be absolutely incorruptible in heart; but to "take thought," as he did, and adopt the necessary outward precautions, he needed also to be, by instinct and by habit, a practical and practiced business man. And such a man Paul was, to a degree not always recognized as it ought to be.

Measure now, if you can, the distance which separates such homely, painstaking, practical good sense as that just exemplified in Paul the business man, from the almost incoherent, almost rhapsodical, strain of the following language (*2* Cor. xii. 2-4):

"I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

If ever there was mysticism, surely we find it here. In using this descriptive word, I do not mean to imply any doubt of the reality of that mysterious rapture, perhaps separating him from his body, of which Paul here speaks, and of which we are of course to understand that he himself was the subject. In the verses quoted, language breaks down under its vain effort to express what Paul indeed plainly declares to have been inexpressible. Was the man sane who could represent himself as having been the subject of such

an experience? That transcendental language, observe, occurs in the self-same letter which contains the wise fiduciary principle given here to illustrate the extraordinary sagacity in attention to details that was characteristic of Paul. The writer of those strange, those staggering, statements, was perfectly conscious of their exceptional character. He almost immediately checked himself, and confessed that, for his own spiritual health and safety, he was afflicted as peculiarly, as he was peculiarly honored. He then, with admirable sobriety, went on to say: "I have become foolish; ye compelled me." Yet it remains that there is no withdrawal, no abatement, there is increase rather, of his mystical claim. He avers that he might tell more of the same sort, and still be speaking only sober, absolute truth. Yes, the apostle Paul was a mystic, as truly as he was a master business man. His rich endowment of common sense he may be said to have needed, to act as a kind of ballast, keeping steady and safe the movement of a mind in him gifted with a quite extraordinary tendency to escape the limitations that bound it to the earthly sphere and to soar away into the realm of the supersensual.

We have thus far, it will have been noted, throughout our whole discussion, dealt almost exclusively with the spirit and method of Paul as preacher, or with the traits in his genius and character that gave his preaching such power. It remains now to speak — very briefly it must be — of the *matter* of his preaching.

I have heretofore, as may be remembered, insisted very strongly that the idea of personal obedience to Christ was the animating and regulating principle of Paul's apostleship. That this idea did indeed occupy that place in his mind and heart, is evident from his own words, in what may be called the inscription to his letter to the Romans: "Jesus Christ our Lord through whom we received grace and apostleship unto obedience of the faith among all nations." But, notwithstanding the capital importance thus attributed by me to the idea of obedience to Christ, as controlling Paul's con-

ception of his work and mission in the world, it would be a mistake to imagine that I propose this idea as constituting the sum and substance, or even the chief part of the sum and substance, of Paul's preaching. Still, a part it was of his doctrine, a very important part; this, besides being the informing spirit and the guiding principle of his activity as preacher.

How important a part of Paul's doctrine the idea thus recurred to necessarily was, will instantly be apparent when once is fully comprehended what was the length and the breadth and the depth and the height of that idea as Paul held it. The inclusion of it and the application of it were in his view absolutely universal. Richard Hooker's famous apotheosis of Law was fully realized in Paul's conception of the will of Christ as binding on every soul of man. Hooker said: "All things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power." So, ideally, in Paul's view, the universe of beings, great and small, owed fealty to Jesus. The following is his mighty language; omnipotence seems to heave like a ground-swell of the sea underneath it:

"Wherefore also God highly exalted him and gave him the name which is above every name [that is, the name, Lord] that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, and of beings on earth, and of beings under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

So much for the universal, all-embracing extension of the sway of Jesus. The intension of it corresponds. For the very thought of the mind is to be subject, as also every impulse of the heart. Jesus, according to Paul, is to be Lord of the belief of men. Whatever He says, is to be believed, even as whatever He bids, is to be done. There is no exemption, no exception, no escape.

As has previously been pointed out, Paul made the most distinct and unmistakable claim to being trustee of revelation,

as to the gospel that he preached, received directly and without mediation of any sort, from the risen and ascended Lord. This we know from his letter to the Galatians. That revelation from Christ, Paul received in the spirit of absolute obedience on his own part; and he everywhere proclaimed it with the demand of absolute obedience on the part of those who heard the proclamation. The obedience to Christ which he himself rendered, as well as the obedience to Christ which he uncompromisingly challenged from others, covered thus the whole range of doctrine inculcated by him. Under the never-intermitting dominance of the idea of subjection due to Christ as the revealing Lord, he preached a vast system of doctrine, in fact, a whole rational and practical theology.

There is one expression used by Paul that is sometimes misunderstood to be a virtual disclaimer on his part of any authority vested in him to govern the faith of Christians. This solitary expression capable of such misconstruction would of course be overwhelmingly overborne by the quite unmistakable contrary tenor of Paul's teaching in general; but it is perhaps worth while to point out the true meaning of the apparently exceptional passage in question. In Second Corinthians, first chapter, last verse, Paul says: "Not that we have lordship over your faith." "Have lordship" is a misleading translation; the translation should be: "We are not lording it over your faith; . . . for in faith ye stand fast." Paul is not speaking at all here of the authority which is his, least of all in order either to disclaim it or to limit it; he is speaking of what he is at that moment engaged in doing. He simply explains that he is not at that moment exercising lordship over the Corinthians' faith; on the contrary, he is merely helping their joy. In point of faith they are not lacking; they already stand fast in their faith. Indeed, interpreted with wise consideration of the general tenor of Paul's epistles, and perhaps especially of his epistles to the Corinthians, this text yields an implication that Paul is conscious of having the authority, which now, however, he is not exercising — as there is no present

need, the Corinthian Christians being already fast in sound faith.

What were the chief points of that gospel which Paul received by direct revelation from Christ? As to two at least of those points, happily the first extant letter to the Corinthians removes all possible question or doubt. He says to the Corinthians: "I delivered to you first of all what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." He then proceeds to insist, with much array of evidence, on the fact of Christ's resurrection. This fact was a keystone fact in the Christian faith, and as such Paul powerfully presents it. But take note of the first article of Paul's gospel; it is that "Christ died for our sins." This is simple language; it states a fact and leaves the statement perfectly bare; that is to say, it accompanies it with no comment, no theory. The fact, then, is here, of what has come to be called the atonement; the fact, but not the doctrine — so far at least as doctrine may be held to imply reason and philosophy.

But stay, perhaps we are hasty in excluding the element of doctrine from this simple statement of fact concerning Christ's death. Let us see. The immediate sequel makes it plain that the subject which at the moment absorbed the interest of the apostle, was the accomplished resurrection of Christ, and, with that, the future resurrection of all the dead. It is a thing therefore worthy of note that in hastening forward to contact and grapple with this absorbing theme, he should, to the mere statement that Christ died, have added the words, "*for our sins,* according to the Scriptures." When he goes on to say that Christ "was buried," to *that* mere statement he adds nothing. There is doctrine, then, after all found here — the doctrine that Christ's *death* was "for our sins."

That is an extremely simple phrase. What does it mean? Does it mean, can it mean, only that Christ died by reason of our sins; that, but for our sins, He would not have been crucified; that His crucifixion involved sin in those who

were responsible for it? It is true enough that if those who put Christ to death had not sinned, they would not have put Christ to death. By reason of *their* sins, on account of *their* sins, Christ died. But Paul says, "for *our* sins"—evidently including with himself those to whom he was writing, namely, Corinthians who had nothing directly to do with the crucifixion of Jesus. The meaning, therefore, of the words "for our sins," in Paul's present use of them, must, interpreted by the general purport of his teaching on this subject, be that Christ died in expiation of our sins, that He died vicariously, that He died an atoning death. This is doctrine; and the fact that this doctrine is here introduced at all, is proof that it was a doctrine supremely important in Paul's view.

I am inclined indeed to believe that the doctrine of the atonement, waterlined as we find it in the whole warp and woof of Paul's epistolary writing, and therefore no doubt pervasive too in his preaching, was still a doctrine reserved by him for impartation and exposition to believers, and not a doctrine preached by him in the first instance to those who had not yet accepted Christ for Master. It is a doctrine which can not, by any ingenuity, or any eloquence, of presentation, be commended to the natural reason of men. There must first be the obedient heart, before a mystery of grace like the atonement can be with hope proposed to human acceptance. The resurrection of Christ, on the contrary, was an historical fact capable of being adequately attested. Paul accordingly at Athens preached Jesus *and the resurrection.* Such preaching was exactly adapted to bring about acceptance of Christ as Lord; and with Christ first accepted as Lord, subsequent indoctrination in all the deep things of the Christian faith was natural and easy. Those mysteries, and mysteries they most of them are, were accepted (when accepted) in acts of faith; that is, in acts of obedience to Christ rendered by the loyal mind and the loyal heart of him who had first accepted Christ for Master. The faith exercised was itself obedience, obedience of the

mind and of the heart. Paul so conceived it and so represented it. Hence such expressions as these from his pen: "obedience of the faith," "obeying the gospel," "submitting to the righteousness of God," "obedient from the heart to that form of doctrine *whereunto ye were delivered.*"

The words just now italicized are significant. They imply, as a necessary condition of discipleship, an attitude or a state of subjection to doctrine, on the part of believers, entered upon in conversion; entered upon, that is, in the very first act of obedience to Christ, namely, the act of accepting him for Master. That accepting Christ for Master was in Paul's view the simple, but sufficient, test of the regenerate heart, is shown in his saying: "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit."

Paul was a doctrinal preacher, he was eminently a doctrinal preacher, but his preaching of doctrine was always in the spirit of challenge to obedience, obedience to be accomplished by the mind and the heart. He seldom or never argued for the distinctive Christian doctrines that he preached, unless citation of Old-Testament Scripture be considered argument;— but that, as I think, should rather be considered pure appeal to authority. He announced his doctrines, he expounded them, he illustrated them, but he did not try to establish them by reasoning and by evidence. As to the facts that he preached it was otherwise. The fact of Christ's resurrection he argued for, he established it by testimony. That fact once proved, Christ's lordship was proved with it. Christ's lordship proved, the way was open to Paul for preaching the revelation of doctrine received by him from Christ, as matter of belief depending for certification on Christ's authority alone. It had by him been received, and it was by them to be received, by faith; by faith which, let me repeat it, was in fact obedience.

It is, of course, out of the question to offer here the briefest summary even of the doctrine that Paul preached; nor would it be to the purpose of the present discussion. Not a jot or tittle is to be abated from the inestimable value

justly set upon Paul's writings as a source of Christian doctrine. Paul was the great theologian of the New Testament. But he *preached* his theology; and he preached it as theology ought to be preached, that is, with a view to its influence on behavior. He aimed to produce by it a full, intelligent obedience, outward and inward, to Christ. I attach as much importance as does anybody to orthodoxy. But there is something yet more important than orthodoxy, and that something is the spirit that produces orthodoxy, namely, the spirit of obedience to Christ. The tendency of these times in religion is to throw off the yoke of authority. What we need most of all is an era of obedience. That will bring about an era of orthodoxy. But the orthodoxy produced will still be an infinitely less good than the obedience that produced it. Not Paul as the theologian, but Paul as the bond-servant of Jesus, and the winner of men to bond-service in fellowship with himself — such is the Paul that by eminence the present age needs to recognize and to hail.

I regard it as an ominous symptom of revolt, on the part of current Christianity, against the mastership of Jesus — the disposition rife now to talk about return to Jesus from Paul. It is none the less revolt because it may be unconscious revolt. With the most awe-inspiring attestation conceivable from heaven, Jesus accredited Paul to be for all time His own chief prophet to the world. How specious, how delusive, the dream of achieving a superior fidelity to Jesus, by resorting to the words reported from his lips of flesh, through historians self-confessed, and by the Master declared, to be slow of heart and dull of apprehension, and treating as of less import the majestic revelations confided from heaven, by the risen and ascended Lord, to the prepared and sympathetic spirit of a man like Paul! What loyalty to Christ Jesus is that?

Paul, like his Lord, was fond of paradoxes, and, like his Lord, he presented in himself a miracle of paradoxes reconciled. He was at once lowly and lordly. He rendered obe-

dience, but he demanded obedience. The obedience he rendered was to Christ, and the very demand that he sometimes made of obedience to himself from others was made as part of his own obedience to Christ. Others' obedience to Paul was thus in fact their obedience to Christ.

That text which, at a point near the beginning of this discussion of Paul as preacher, was said to be a text so full and rich in revelation of the character of Paul's preaching, "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord," is worthy of more study than we then gave it. It has not only express meanings, but an implicit meaning. Expressly, it disclaims and claims both at once. It disclaims for Paul the habit on his part of preaching himself as lord. It claims for Paul the habit of preaching Christ as Lord. But the implicit meaning is important. That meaning is, that Paul stood conspicuously before his hearers in the attitude of one demanding obedience. The charge against him of his antagonists evidently had been that he was a domineering spirit. This charge would not have been made unless he habitually demanded obedience. Paul admits, nay, he insists, that in fact he did; but he says it was not in effect obedience to himself that he demanded, but obedience to Christ. And it was to Christ, not simply as Christ is represented in the gospels (the gospels, indeed, as we have them, did not then exist), but to Christ as Christ revealed Himself, apart from the gospels, to Paul. Nobody can refuse to hear Paul without refusing to hear Christ; for Christ has chosen to speak through Paul.

I will not conceal my conviction that a crisis is to-day upon the church of Christ, as grave as any that ever has put her to test. It is not that there is so much disposition to depart from traditional orthodoxy. It is not that there is so much disposition to subject the Bible to criticism. These tendencies are not in themselves dangerous; they are even wholesome. Not in *themselves* dangerous; but, in so far as they are symptoms of revolt against Christ speaking through Paul, they are dangerous in the extreme. Paul, let

it be well understood and remembered, is the chief voice of the glorified Christ, speaking to His church and to the world. When Christ met this man on his way to Damascus, in the glory and the terror of that great light, it was as if a Voice uttered again from heaven the same words that once accredited the incarnate Son of God, and said also of Paul, "Hear ye *him*."

Jesus is amply patronized now, admired, lauded — loved, I was about to add; but I remembered His own saying, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," and then I wondered, Is He indeed loved? For, with all the ascription to Jesus that is current and customary now in our speech and our writing about Him, is He obeyed? Do we bow down to Him as Master? Do we take upon us the yoke of His authority? As for the matter of attestation, what Jesus has given us, for obedience, through Paul, is not less, it is rather more, attested than what is reported as having been given us from His living human lips. For my own part, often when I hear Jesus praised, as it is the fashion of our time to praise Jesus, I listen and seem to catch the tones of His voice saying over and over again those solemn words of rejection from His mouth, with their pendulum-like swing of rhythm: "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

No persuasion enters more deeply into my mind, my conscience, and my heart, than the persuasion that I press the message chiefly needed by the church of to-day, when I present Paul as the highest human model for all preachers, and in especial when I most commandingly present him as, above all things else, the apostle of *obedience to Christ.*

XXII

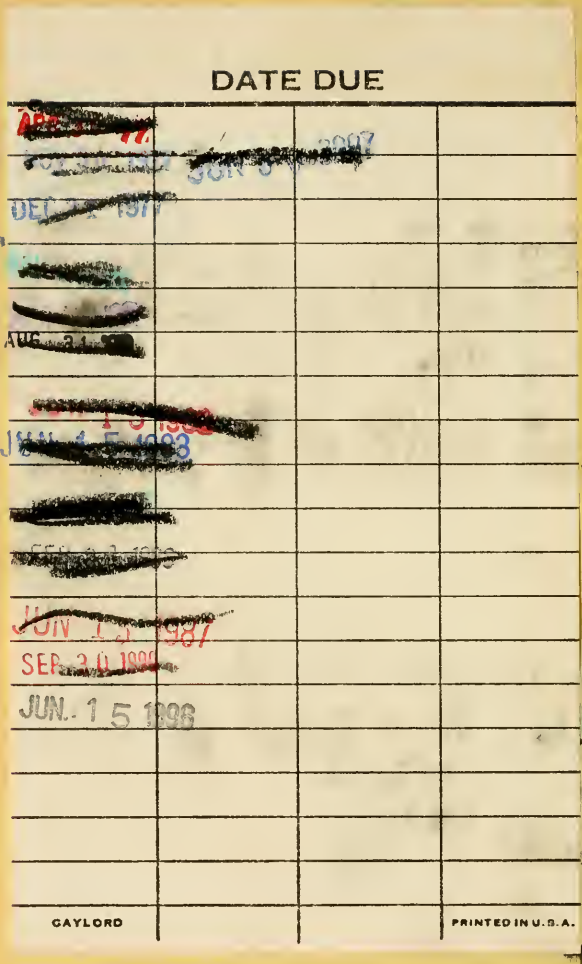
XIX

O THOU to whom the imperial spirit of Paul
Bowed down in worship as to God Most High,
Forefend that in fatuity I try
To find for Thee some finite measure! All
Endeavors of comparison must fall
Futile in presence of infinity!
What human greatness then so great that I,
By saying that Thou art greater, should extol
Thee worthily?

Yet, is it true that Thou
Wert infinite? For Thou wert human; yea,
Didst to the burden of our sorrows bow;
Obedient unto death becoming, lay
Thy meek head in the sepulchre! Whom now,
Thence risen, all ages and all worlds obey!

XX

A LIVING and life-giving soul! A source
And origin, exhaustless like the sea,
Of impact, impulse, movement, energy!
A radiant centre throbbing thick with force,
In pulses of momentum sped their course
Wherever, down the lines of history,
Thought has been molding human destiny!
A glorious voice, unchangeable to hoarse
Or mute, but ever ringing loud and clear
Its one great message in the ears of men:
"Christ Jesus risen, ascended, from His sphere
Above all height, beyond all finite ken,
Bending to sway a sovereign sceptre here,
And one day to return to earth again!"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